

The Wayne Williams Trial



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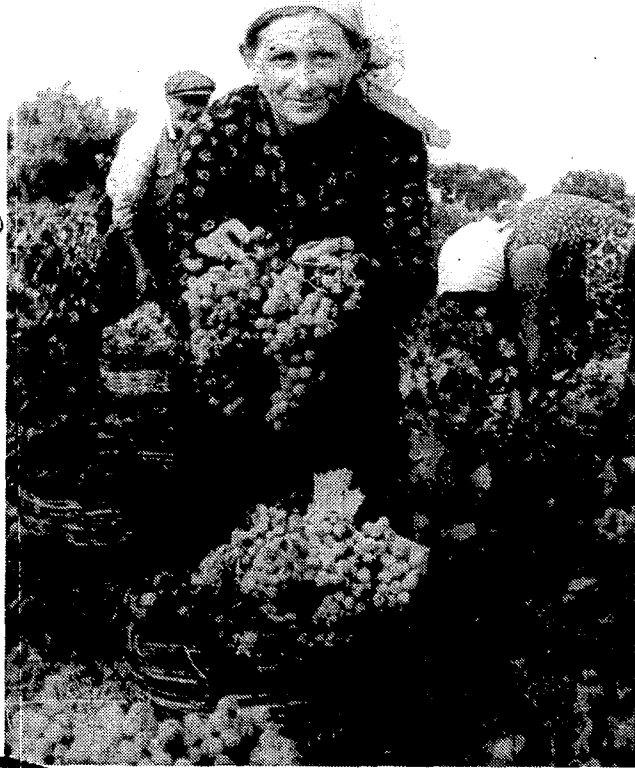
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THE INSIDE STORY



The government plans to reorganize agriculture into a national system of farm cooperatives.

Socialism is Greek to them

By Stas Margaronis

ATHENS

Last October, after nearly 40 years of right-wing rule and seven of military dictatorships, Greece elected its first Socialist government. Intending to redefine the terms of public ownership—as a process of “socialization” rather than the nationalization of failed industries as has been the pattern in Britain—Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou wants workers and localities to share in determining the country’s future and to have a stake in the outcome.

But first, the government of the Pan Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) must face the problem of 25 percent inflation and a 6 percent unemployment rate. Though low by American standards, this rate of unemployment is rare in Greece and is threatening to rise, in large part because of the international recession.

In a recent interview in Athens, George Papandreou, the prime minister’s son and himself a deputy from western Greece, said the government will first take on some 100 private companies that are deeply in debt to it. Having borrowed heavily from national banks under the previous government, the companies are vulnerable to conversion of their debt into stock, which would give the government a controlling position in many industries.

The government will reorganize the companies by placing elected worker representatives and representatives of the state and the localities on each business’ board of directors. But the state plans to keep its influence to a minimum except as company policy applies to the government’s national plan. Papandreou said that companies already controlled by the government—for example, the utilities and the banks—will be opened to worker and local government participation as well. He believes these reforms will make the government-controlled concerns more accountable and efficient.

According to Papandreou, the government’s socialization policy differs from traditional nationalization in that it aims at giving the company maximum freedom from government interference while at the same time utilizing worker participation to motivate productivity from inside the company and local political support for the company from the outside.

Papandreou said industries that do not rely on government assistance—such as mining, cement and shipping—will not be taken over. The government will set up coordinating councils composed of workers, rep-

resentatives of the state and local governments and company managers. They “will gain experience in the running of the company,” he said. The councils will attempt to harmonize corporate planning with the government’s development program.

The government also plans to reorganize agriculture into a national system of farm cooperatives, which will be voluntary. The state will offer technical assistance and planning, and individual farmers will provide their individual initiative to grow and market crops.

Because of the country’s proximity to the Middle East, Greece is hoping it can attract investment capital from Arab nations. Economics writer Adonis Thaskalopoulos said he has spoken to commercial and economics ministers from Arab countries who are considering making major investments in Greece. These hopes were buoyed by last December’s visit of PLO leader Yasir Arafat and the upgrading of the PLO office in Athens to commission status, which places it on the same level as the Israeli office.

But international economist Michaelis Papgenakis believes these hopes for massive Arab investments are too optimistic. “The opportunity the Arab world offers Greece is in trade of goods we are already manufacturing, such as appliances, cement and foodstuffs.” If PASOK policy is directed at improving both the productivity in these fields and the transportation system so that goods can be delivered sooner, the country will realize major economic benefits. But presently, government policy is still too general and vague.

Opposition deputy Andonis Samaras, member of the conservative Nea Demokratia Party, said the government’s socialization program is overly ambitious. For example, he said, PASOK’s raising and indexing of wages was inflationary and will worsen the country’s already galloping 25 percent inflation rate. He believes the government should concentrate on an anti-inflation program that emphasizes cost control over government spending.

He predicted that PASOK will find it tougher than it realizes to reorganize the debtor industries and that—unless it wants to risk massive unemployment—it may be forced to continue subsidizing them as the government did under his party.

Civil service reforms.

Andreas Christolides, head of the semi-governmental Athens News Agency, noted that the massive patronage system in civil service—a practice that has gone on for many years—will not be changed easily. According to Christolides, one example of the problem is the public TV network, ERT, where, he claims, “there are 300 patronage employees who do nothing.”

PASOK hopes to end decades of governmental interference and restrictions on Greece’s labor unions. The newly installed head of the Greek General Confederation of Labor, Orestes Hatzivasiliou, a Eurocommunist allied to PASOK, said that the leadership of the General Confederation under Nea Demokratia had failed to register 400 legitimate unions and labor federations with leftist leanings representing 150,000 workers. This led to pro-right control of the confederation. Hatzivasiliou said the job of registering unions will be completed by the end of 1982, and a new board will be elected for the General Confederation.

The government’s foreign policy is more in flux than its domestic policy. This is not surprising given recent events in Poland and changes in attitude by other countries in the Western Alliance. Greece seems to be tilting away from both the U.S. and Western Europe, although for different reasons. While the government has toned down its threats of removing itself from NA-

TO, it will probably try to negotiate as fast as possible a timetable to get U.S. bases out of the country, or at least to exercise more control over what they are used for. Greece’s quarrel with Europe has primarily concerned its membership in the Common Market, which was rammed through without a popular vote by former Nea Demokratia Prime Minister Constantine Caramanlis. According to several sources, the country will probably stay in the Common Market but continue to try to negotiate better terms—particularly more protection for its agricultural industries.

The government’s changes in foreign policy orientation have been paralleled by changes in cultural orientation. In the arts and media, the government is moving from the influences of the U.S. and the West toward the Middle East, where Greece has cultural roots.

Vasili Vasilichos, deputy director of ERT, Greece’s major publicly owned TV network, said opposition spokespersons were not allowed on Greek TV until PASOK took power. Also, most programming came from the U.S. and Britain and a lot of it was “third-rate.” Greek programming was controlled by producers who used their political influence with the government to have ERT finance TV programs of their own, rather than ERT’s, choosing. Because ERT had no control over these producers, they made huge profits on their shows by underpaying actors and technicians. Vasilichos said he believes quality programs can go hand-in-hand with traditional commercial fare. From now on ERT will produce its own programs, and will seek out talented directors to produce higher quality TV shows.

At the Greek Ministry of Culture, now headed by former actress Melina Mercouri, steps are being taken to make Greeks more aware of modern Greek history as opposed to the traditional focus on ancient Greece that, as one official put it, “implies that serious Greek history stopped 2,000 years ago.”

In keeping with the government’s policy of decentralization, more theater and artistic institutions will be built in the outlying provinces. The ministry will encourage more education in Greek folkways and in Greek folk dancing. Better preservation of the older 19th-century towns and architecture will also be attempted. The preservationist effort in Athens has been lost largely because the Nea Demokratia government allowed financial consideration to override landmark status of buildings. As a result, many buildings were demolished.

Margaret Papandreou, wife of the prime minister, said women’s rights will be one of PASOK’s major legislative reforms this year. The proposed reforms include a law banning sex discrimination on the job, equal rights for the wife in the family (presently, the law favors the husband), legalization of abortion and an equal rights commission. The government has already ended the system of smaller pensions for women farmers than for men doing similar work—a long-standing goal of women’s groups. She said she anticipates strong reactions from Greece’s patriarchal society, but also noted that women’s organizations have markedly increased in strength in recent years. Thus they should have considerable lobbying power in the future.

The success of Greece’s Socialist experiment depends on two things. The first is mastering the civil service and providing an effective and corruption-free bureaucracy to administer its policies, thereby showing Greeks that the government can solve a tough problem. The second is the economy. If the government can stimulate the economy, reduce inflation and keep unemployment under control, Greek Socialists will have a long and happy life.

Stas Margaronis recently returned from a three-week trip to Greece.

IN THESE TIMES

The Independent Socialist Newspaper

Published 42 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, first week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June, July and August by The Institute for Policy Studies, Inc., 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60622, (312) 489-4444. Institute for Policy Studies National Offices, 1901 Q Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

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This issue (Vol. 6, No. 16) published March 17, 1982, for newsstand sales March 17-23, 1982.

Atlantans still have doubts

By Patricia Ohmans

ATLANTA

THE TRIAL LASTED MORE THAN two months, but jurors in the Wayne Williams trial took only 11½ hours to reach their decision. Before beginning their deliberations jurors held hands and cried and prayed together. Sequestered for nine weeks, charged with resolving the most publicized murder trial in Georgia's history, they were under enormous pressure. Perhaps that is why it was prosecutor Lewis Slaton, and not the jury's forewoman, who read the verdict sentencing Williams to two consecutive life terms for the murders of Nathaniel Cater and Jimmy Ray Payne.

Many people hoped that the ruling would end the tragedy of Atlanta's missing and murdered children. But for such a momentous decision, it had a curious lack of resonance. For two years, Atlantans had tallied the body count, as two, then ten, then more than two dozen children were found stabbed or strangled or drowned. By last summer, a child's body turned up almost every two weeks. But Williams was tried for the deaths of two adults, among the last of the murder victims. The defense was forced to shadow-box with the accusation of the mass murder of children. For two months, the Williams trial had been a great and awful public spectacle. When it ended without the catharsis a mass murder conviction would have delivered, Atlantans, though relieved, were unsatisfied.

The trial ended Saturday, Feb. 27. On March 1, District Attorney Slaton amplified his contention that Williams had killed not only Cater and Payne, but as many as 21 other black youths. He claimed fiber evidence, central to the Cater and Payne convictions, also linked Williams with these other victims. Without further prosecutions—and Slaton said there would be none—Williams was declared the killer of all but a few of the missing and murdered children.

It was like reading a mystery with the middle pages torn out. Without further exposition of Slaton's "proof," one was left merely hoping that he was right. The prosecution never established a clear motive, even for the killings of Cater and Payne.

Some people bought the theory advanced by the prosecution. Williams was a sexual deviant, a black man who had only contempt for his own race, a 23-year-old failure who vented his self-hatred and frustration on easy targets: street kids. The prosecution produced witnesses who said they had seen Williams with one or another of the victims shortly before they were found dead. Others testified Williams made homosexual propositions to them, and still others reported that Williams had made disparaging remarks about blacks to them.

Damaging evidence.

Less subjective, and more damaging, was the evidence that fiber, hair and blood samples taken from Williams' car and home matched samples on Cater and Payne's bodies. Williams' inability to explain why he happened to drive across the James Jackson Parkway Bridge just when a police recruit on stakeout heard a splash—the splash prosecutors contended was Cater's body cleaving the waters of the Chattahoochee River—probably also weighed against him.

But for all of that, there were those who pointed out that there was no smoking gun, no eyewitness—only the fiber evidence some thought too technical for the jurors to grasp. Clearly Williams, who repeatedly lied about his background, business and family life, was something of a loser, but an unpleasant manner and compulsive self-aggrandizement do not make a man a murderer.

Williams, the defense argued, was too success-oriented, too passive, even too

physically weak to strangle Cater and Payne. In his closing arguments, defense attorney Alvin Binder led his client over to the jury box and implored jurors to touch Williams' hands. Were these soft pudgy hands the hands of a killer? he asked.

Atlantans packed the courtroom throughout the trial. Toward the end, many of them stood in line for half a day; if they didn't get one of the 80 seats reserved for spectators in the morning, they stuck around until the afternoon. On the second day Williams took the stand, would-be spectators lined up outside the Sulton County courthouse at 4:30 a.m. By 8:30, the line stretched down the courthouse steps, through the tangle of TV

Short on time and money, divided by infighting, the defense team was forced to parry the intimations of mass murder, without knowing all the facts.

Atlanta not guilty.

If that thought gave some people pause, in the days after the verdict, Atlanta's newspaper editors caught their breath and let out a collective sigh of relief. Atlanta *Journal* and *Constitution* columnists, always among the city's biggest boosters, declared that the city's public image need not be further tarnished. "THE CITY IS NOT GUILTY—THE SYSTEM WORKED" exulted Lewis Grizzard, whose popular column appears in both papers. "...no glaring

and murdered children a closed book," she said. A week later, the city reopened the task force. But this time, Mayor Andrew Young announced the task force would investigate *all* the unsolved murders in Atlanta. How it differs from the city's homicide department is something Young has not yet explained.

Bell and Taylor's protestations would have carried more of an emotional charge had the "mothers committee" established to prompt police investigation of the murders not been recently investigated itself by the state consumer affairs department. Some money donated to "stop the children's murders" allegedly paid for cosmetic surgery for Venus Taylor and New York shopping trips for other mothers. The committee was disbanded shortly before the trial, its finances in disarray.

On Feb. 12, Homer and Faye Williams, retired schoolteachers—parents who doted on their only child Wayne—took advantage of a trial recess to visit



For such a momentous decision, the Wayne Williams verdict had a curious lack of resonance.

cables stuck to the sidewalk with electricity and down the block.

People in line traded jokes with the cameramen who waited to get their obligatory shot of witnesses leaving the courthouse. One local station routinely cut from newscasts to commercial with shots of friendly looking Atlantans waving to the camera as they walked to work or school. The contrast with videotape shots of witnesses scurrying down the steps, shielding their faces with briefcases or coats, provided some of the trial's only comic relief.

For the most part TV newscasters stuck to recitations of the day's testimony during the trial. But once the verdict was announced, there was an odd ambivalence to some of the televised post-trial analysis. On the local CBS affiliate the night of the verdict, newscasters quizzed an Emory University law professor about Williams' chances on appeal. The professor was sanguine. He said Judge Clarence Cooper had erred early in the trial when he barred Williams' lawyers from examining evidence that purportedly linked him with at least 10 other murders. Later, Cooper allowed the prosecution to introduce the evidence, to show that Payne and Cater's deaths were part of a larger pattern. In the sudden focus on the appeal, one sensed the newscasters' acknowledgment of the problems facing the defense.

doubts remain that the killer of Atlanta's children is not behind bars for the rest of his life....Let the record show that this city, this beautiful, marvelous city I love, stood trial before the world. And was found not guilty."

Among those with more than a few "glaring doubts" was Camille Bell, mother of murder victim Yusef Bell, and one of the most vocal in prodding the police to investigate the murders. Throughout the trial, Bell maintained Williams' innocence, implying he had been framed. Her claim gained credibility when the defense was denied a motion to subpoena top city officials and Georgia's governor George Busbee, citing a closed door meeting between Busbee, Slaton and police officials on June 19. At the meeting, the defense contended, the reluctant DA was pressured to arrest and prosecute Williams. Two days after the meeting, Williams was indeed arrested.

Other victims' parents who may have been willing to concede on the Cater and Payne murders, cried conspiracy when Slaton announced the dismantling of the special task force that had been set up in mid-July 1980 to investigate the deaths of their children.

"I knew they would try to do this—to put it all off on [Williams]," Venus Taylor, another victims' mother told reporters after the trial. "They are only doing it because they want to make the missing

city hall. There, Homer Williams shook hands briefly with Andrew Young. In the newspaper photos, Young—articulate, gifted, good; as mayor, the apotheosis of middle-class black aspirations—is reaching down to clasp the hand of Homer Williams, whose son would shortly be called "a mad dog killer" by the prosecutors.

In a trial where the judge and most of the jury were black, the defendant was a light-skinned black man and all but one of the victims were dark-skinned blacks, the picture spoke volumes. If race was an issue in the trial, as defense attorney Binder later claimed, the issue was nothing so simple as white hatred of blacks. Rather it was the complexity of middle-class blacks' feelings about themselves and those with darker skins and darker futures than their own.

"Whoever heard of a black mass murderer?" Alvin Binder shouted at the jury at the close of the trial. Twenty years ago, many southerners could not even conceive of a black mayor. Now, the doubt Binder raised was not enough. But in the aftermath of the murders and the trial, as Atlanta's dogwood and forsythia burst into bloom and Wayne Williams' lawyers prepare his appeal, the shadow of that doubt lingers. ■

Patricia Ohmans is an Atlanta freelance journalist.

IN SHORT

Ban of marble

In the months since a state of war was declared in his country, Andrzej Wajda has been conspicuously absent from public view. Poland's leading filmmaker, whose work was often critical of his country's brand of socialism, was so widely respected that the authorities had always seemed reluctant to punish him. (When *Man of Marble* came out, for example, the minister of culture was fired, but Wajda went unscathed.) For years, Wajda had also been a leading bureaucrat in the national film industry. So his silence since last December was especially worrisome to his supporters in this country, who started a petition campaign for his "release."

He finally surfaced in Paris late last month, on a visit to work on a new film, *Danton and Robespierre*, and to accept a special award for his work. The director declined to answer questions concerning Poland, but he did issue an open letter to the media that was later reprinted in *Variety*:

"The circumstances in my country, as well as my personal situation, are so difficult and dramatic that you must excuse me if I decline to speak about them publicly. Especially since for 25 years now I have directed films that were aimed against the state of affairs that has come to pass in my country since Dec. 13, 1981. Thus, what has been happening is in a way a personal defeat for me. But I have enough personal and professional experience behind me to believe that this momentary defeat cannot crush the immense hopes of millions of Poles for a great movement of solidarity and the development of democratic liberties in my homeland...."

Cambridge is listless

Ever since draft registration was reinstituted in 1980, most cities have voluntarily posted a list of registrants—a practice that was temporarily discontinued in 1975. But late last month the Cambridge, Mass., City Council ordered the city clerk to remove the list from public access. "To our knowledge, Cambridge is the first city in the country to refuse to post the list," said Rich Schreuer of the Anti-War Organizing League (AWOL), the group that prompted the Council action. Calling the order "a slap in the face to the Selective Service," Schreuer said he hoped the decision would encourage other communities to follow suit.

"I can't figure out any reason for this list to be posted in City Hall other than to encourage people to spy on one another and turn each other in, and I find that despicable," said Council member Francis Duehay, who co-sponsored the order.

Mail orders

On Jan. 10, the mailing costs of many nonprofit organizations more than doubled. It wasn't supposed to happen so fast: Under 1974 postal legislation, most of the rate hikes had been scheduled to take place in stages. The Postal Service ordered the accelerated increases only after Congress, under strong pressure from the Reagan administration, passed a "continuing" budget resolution that included nearly a \$200 million cut from the subsidy it previously had approved for nonprofit mail users.

But there's still hope. Calvin G. Zon reports that support for a rollback of the rate hikes has been growing on Capitol Hill. Spearheading the effort is Sen. Quentin Burdick (D-N.D.), a member of the Appropriations Committee, who plans to offer a rider adding \$77 million to the current subsidy for nonprofit mailers. Susan Shaw, an aide to Sen. Burdick, told Zon a few weeks ago that 49 senators had expressed interest in or support for the Burdick amendment. "It looks real good," she said. "We're inching toward a majority." Congress must act on the legislation by the end of this month.

There has also been widespread opposition to the rate increases from the religious, labor and educational press. Testifying before a House subcommittee in late February, James M. Cesnik, representing the AFL-CIO's International Labor Press Association, noted that the second-class nonprofit structure "was specifically set up by Congress to ease the flow of information vital to the democratic process." "We believe," Cesnik added, "that freedom of expression should not be predicated on the cost of a postage stamp."

Stock block

The College Press Service (via PNS Radio) reports that Michigan may become the first state to require all its public colleges and universities to sell their stocks in companies that do business in South Africa. Under a bill now before the Michigan legislature, the divestiture order would even apply to those firms that have pledged to promote human rights among their South African employees.

Reaction to the proposal has been mixed. Michigan State has already complied: In 1980, it became one of the nation's first institutions to divest itself of all such holdings. Eastern Michigan has sold off some of its South African stocks. But the University of Michigan, with about \$100 million invested in South Africa-related firms, claims that the bill conflicts with laws requiring endowment managers to invest only according to the school's financial interests.

—Josh Kornbluth



The "last hired, first fired" syndrome has been affecting blacks across the country.

Cutbacks force courts to decide who gets fired

WASHINGTON—Layoffs and high unemployment are reviving the old conflict between minority workers and union seniority systems. Minority workers recently won the latest round when a U.S. appeals court ruled that the seniority clause in a Boston teachers union contract could be set aside to protect minority employment gains. But that decision did not end the legal battle. American Federation of Teachers (AFT) human rights director Barbara Van Blake says the union will appeal to the Supreme Court.

The Boston controversy began last year, when Massachusetts voters approved a tax-cutting measure known as Proposition 2½, forcing massive layoffs of teachers and other public workers. The layoffs threatened to reverse the effects of a minority teacher hiring plan contained in Boston's 1974 federal school desegregation order.

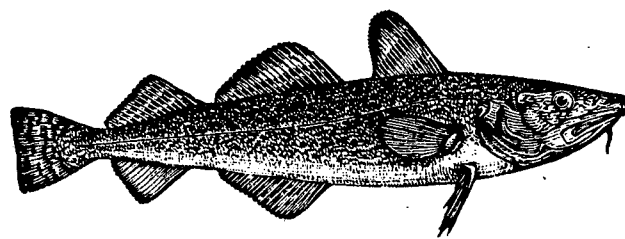
The Boston decision does not necessarily apply to other seniority-vs.-affirmative action disputes. The appeals court based its ruling on earlier court findings that Boston had deliberately maintained a segregated school system. Under such circumstances, the court said, "race-conscious remedies" are required to "safeguard the progress toward desegregation painstakingly achieved over the last several years."

The "last hired, first fired" syndrome—in which those hired most recently lose their jobs before their co-workers do—has been keenly felt by blacks across the country. In recent months, black unemployment has peaked at the highest level since the '30s. In Washington, a recent congressional study revealed that black workers, who hold 22 percent of government jobs, lost 34 percent of the jobs in President Reagan's first round of federal layoffs. Several cases similar to the one in Boston are making their way toward the Supreme Court. In a related matter, the Court is to rule later this year on two cases in which minority workers charged that seniority

systems perpetuated the effects of past discrimination.

NAACP Legal Defense Fund attorney Barry Goldstein charges that seniority rules, rigidly applied, continue to hold back black workers in many industries. But union officials are virtually unanimous in their defense of seniority rules. "Where there's a layoff it should always be by reverse seniority," says Van Blake of the AFT. Doing otherwise, she argues, forces individual white workers to pay for discrimination by their employers. A permanent solution to the conflict, says AFL-CIO civil rights director William Pollard, can be provided only by successful efforts to achieve full employment.

—Steve Askin



Cod is a hot issue on the island.

Greenland to EEC: Go fish

COPENHAGEN—By a 52 percent majority, Greenlanders have decided to withdraw from the European Economic Community (EEC). Greenland's first decision on a foreign policy matter since "home rule" became effective in 1979—following 26 years of increasing independence from the Danish Kingdom—must be ratified by Greenland's parliament and then Denmark's.

Seventy-five percent of the island's 32,000 eligible voters went to the polls on Feb. 23, many trekking on skis and dog sleds. Though Denmark maintains final power over foreign policy matters with Greenland, Prime Minister Anker Jorgensen of Denmark has assured Greenlanders that their decision will be honored.

Since Denmark joined the EEC in 1973, it has handed over about \$150 million in EEC funds to Greenland—some \$3,000 per inhabitant. But Greenlanders complain that their problems are often neglected by bureaucrats who worry more about countries with larger populations. (Though Greenland is the world's biggest island, its population is a mere 50,000.)

The main issue for Greenland's EEC opponents is fish, the country's number one export. Each EEC member may catch up to a certain amount of cod and red fish within 200 miles of Greenland's shores, but the ceiling is often ignored. In a recent interview with a Greenland newspaper, a German trawler captain said that false log books are kept by many skipper, resulting in Greenland's loss of up to 50 percent more cod than legally permitted.

Greenland hopes to make up for the future loss of EEC aid—and, perhaps, reduced business

ties—by selling more fish to Canada and the U.S. The island may also import more goods from those and other non-EEC countries, where tariffs are lower, and sell them fishing licenses as well.

The Scandinavian left is divided on Greenland's EEC membership. Some—along with right-wing but Europe-oriented politicians—fear that Greenland will fall under greater U.S. influence. (There are already three military bases and surveillance installations on the icy land that are operated jointly by the U.S. and Denmark.) But other leftists emphasize that the EEC operates under an international capitalist framework that solves no fundamental economic problems for small, less developed countries.

Greenland's leading Social Democratic Party says there will be no change in policy toward NATO, which it supports, nor any increase in political or military ties with the U.S.

—Ron Ridenour

SOUTH AFRICA

Police operate with insolence



Recent demonstrations indicate that the anti-apartheid movement is entering a new and even more aggressive phase.

By James North

JOHANNESBURG

HOW MUCH SUFFERING CAN one man endure? The apartheid regime seems to be testing this sinister proposition in the case of black trade union leader Thozamile Gqweta.

Gqweta, the personable young president of the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU), experienced a series of tragedies last fall. A mysterious fire—probably arson—destroyed his mother's house near the small hamlet of King Williams Town, killing her and his uncle. Next, police in East London, the port city where SAAWU is the strongest, opened fire on a group of mourners returning from the funeral. One person died—20-year-old Diliswa Roxisa, Gqweta's fiancée.

Their maneuvers show the regime's determination to try to smash any radical resistance.

Then, Gqweta and other SAAWU leaders were detained. It was the fifth time he had been locked up without a trial in two years. Thozzi—that's what everyone calls him—was arrested in part of the same November roundup as Dr. Neil Aggett, the white unionist who died in detention on Feb. 5 (*In These Times*, Feb. 24).

Gqweta and SAAWU's vice president Njikelase were moved up to Johannesburg, where security police have apparently been attempting to build a case against them and other union activists.

A few days after Aggett's funeral, on Feb. 13, the police announced Thozzi had been admitted to a hospital psychiatric

ward. They maintained an armed guard, but permitted his brother Robert to visit him. Robert told the local press Thozzi was suffering from a severe headache, depression and anxiety, had difficulty in speaking and had experienced a dramatic weight loss and partial amnesia. "His eyes were bloodshot and at one stage tears came rolling down his cheeks," Robert said.

A perverse tribute.

This description of Thozzi is a perverse tribute to the barbarism of the security police. In an interview last June, he had been warm, outgoing and, above all, healthy. An athletic 29-year-old, Thozzi was a star in the non-racial rugby league in the East London township before turning to trade union organizing.

Back then, he had reminisced cheerfully about how he had helped to start SAAWU—with an estimated 75,000 members one of the largest of the new, militant union groupings formed in the past few years. He had first become sharply aware of worker concerns when he sold furniture in the early '70s. He had remembered, "Guys would come into the store, buy dining room sets on higher purchase [the installment plan] and return the next month saying they had been fired. They couldn't make the payments."

Thozzi began to protest conditions at the furniture store. Eventually, he lost his job and started reading about trade unionism. Then he took to the streets.

"I couldn't get into the factories themselves," he had remembered. "I used to wait outside, both before and after work, passing out leaflets. I would hand them out, and try to be looking for the police at the same time." He laughed at himself as he pantomimed some furtive gestures.

Thozzi had continued, "I used to ride the buses as well. I'd sit raised up in the front, turn around and start giving my speech. I told them how they could contact me and where our next meeting was going to be."

At that stage, Thozzi had already been

detained by both the South African authorities and police from the Ciskei, the bantustan that borders East London. He had said, in what is now a bitter irony, that he actually preferred being locked up by the South Africans. Another SAAWU official had once explained it this way: "At least the South Africans interrogate you. In the Ciskei prison you just sit."

It is clear that the police almost tortured Thozzi to death. What probably saved his life was the uproar, both local and

international, following Aggett's death. At that time, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, based in Brussels, issued a stiff statement of concern about Thozzi.

His brother has visited him several more times, and reports that he is slowly recovering. But he is by no means out of danger. Nor are the close to 200 other political detainees, several of whom have also been admitted to hospitals.

Meanwhile, Member of Parliament Helen Suzman dramatically revealed to parliament recently that she had received a letter smuggled from one of the detainees claiming Aggett had been tortured. An official inquest into the young doctor's death begins March 2. The Aggett family is represented by George Bizas, an attorney who is probably the shrewdest cross-examiner in the country. The inquest may turn out to be a repeat of the hearing following the 1977 death in detention of black leader Steve Biko, during which security police made arrogant and shocking revelations about their interrogation methods.

Business as usual.

The police continue to operate with insolence. In a security trial now in progress, two young leaders of the 1976 Soweto student uprising, Khotso Seatlhalo and Mary Masabata Laate, are being tried for attempting to form a new guerrilla organization, the South African Youth Revolutionary Council.

The police built their case around the large group of people they have detained since last June, whom they intended to use as state witnesses against the two. But so far 10 of these detainees have refused to testify, and, as punishment, they have received 18-month prison terms.

Thus, the regime's case has been disintegrating. No matter. The security police recently engineered the kidnapping of a refugee from the neighboring country of Botswana, bringing him back to South Africa. Apparently the regime will try to use him to reconstruct its shattered case. It is claiming that the refugee, Peter Lengene, returned voluntarily.

These desperate maneuvers underscore the regime's determination to try to smash radical resistance to the apartheid system, especially from the new and growing trade union movement. But the regime will not achieve its objective that easily.

As Thozamile Gqweta fervently said last June, before undergoing the worst of his ordeal: "As long as there is work to be done, there will be workers; as long as there are workers, they will be aggrieved; as long as they have grievances, they will want trade unions to look after their grievances."

GUATEMALA

Fraud charged in national election

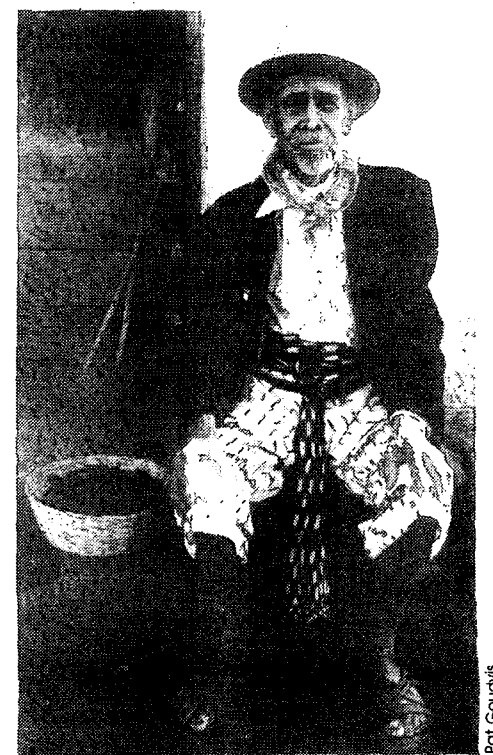
By Nelson Santana

GUATEMALA CITY

ONCE THE INDICATIONS OF fraud became clear following Guatemala's March 7 election, the three losing candidates banded together to protest. Judging from the still-unconfirmed reports coming into the capital, the techniques had been varied if primitive: 5,000 voter registration cards confiscated days before the election in the remote reaches of the Transversal del Norte; a sudden inexplicable embargo on voting results from noon to six on Monday, March 8, when they were to be made public; two opposition candidates murdered on election day in Esquintla.

When the opposition parties called for a peaceful march to the presidential palace two days after the election, they were denied permission. And when the presidential candidates, all former gov-

Continued on the following page



Pat Goudvis

Fraud

Continued from the previous page

ernment office holders, prepared to deliver a statement in person, the government forces reacted brutally. Riot police and troops in full combat gear filled the capital's Sixth Avenue, hurling cans of tear gas into the crowds and firing shots over the heads of the startled press.

Several reporters were beaten and their cameras battered with government soldiers' gun butts. An ABC-TV film crew as well as several still photographers were taken into police custody.

The candidates themselves were hauled into police vehicles and placed under detention for an hour before they were escorted to their homes under armed guard. It looked as though the Guatemalan government, after extending endless funds and energies in their public relations effort to promote their elections as a "fiesta civica," was going to get bad press.

General Anibal Guevara, the new president-elect of Guatemala, had his image problems in the weeks preceding election day. "The general had a big advantage," one of his campaign managers boasted with humorous candor, "in that he has the whole government at his disposal for the campaign."

In practical terms that meant a war chest fattened off tax monies and obligatory contributions rumored to surpass \$8 million, party membership of government employees interested in keeping

their jobs and preferential rates for campaign propaganda in the capital's newspapers and TV stations. It also meant use of a government helicopter, as documented by a widely distributed photo showing Guevara using it to campaign in a remote province. Guevara responded to accusations that he was politicizing public property by commenting, "The photo could have been a fake," while the minister of agriculture, to whose ministry it belonged, huffed that he could lend his helicopter to "any taxpaying citizen of the Guatemalan Republic" he pleased.

Up to election day, Guatemalans tended to make conditional predictions: If there was fraud, Guevara would win; if there wasn't, he would come in third. This capital city tensed perceptibly the day before the election, abuzz with various rumors: the guerrillas were going to blow up all of the government buildings on Saturday; there was going to be a coup on Sunday; losing right-wing candidate Mario Sandoval was going to send his private army into the streets on Monday.

Instead, election Sunday dawned with a gray calm. There was intense fighting between government and guerrilla forces in the northern highlands, but in much of the country the guerrillas were content to let the elections run their course, merely hacking down trees here and there to impede roadways.

When it was over it was clear that Guevara had won, and that there indeed had been electoral fraud. For example, at the Industrial Park polling place here, the third voter in line found the ballot box already stuffed full.

In the aftermath of the voting this question remained: How much of the

President-elect General Guevara ascended to his candidacy through an obscure selection process known only to the Guatemalan military fraternity.

fraud can be proven and can anything be done about it? Right-wing candidate Mario Sandoval Alarcon, mentor of Salvadoran Major Roberto d'Aubuisson, had run on an anti-communist platform that forsook the deaths of 500,000 Guatemalans as necessary to rid the country of subversion. Following the election, he responded to his loss by calling for a mass demonstration. Alejandro Maldonado, the soft-spoken candidate for the Christian-Democratic coalition, won here and had been expected by many to take the country. His strategists desperately lobbied his international backers and the U.S. embassy for its support on a recount.

Ironically, the Guevara election could be the worst thing that has ever happened

to the Guatemalan military. Guevara ascended to his candidacy through an obscure selection process known only to the Guatemalan military fraternity, and he has virtually no popular support of his own. Furthermore, the military's increasing activity as an economic force has deeply angered the private sector, which claims that corruption is driving the country to financial ruin.

One point of contention is the oil-rich territory of the Peten, whose lands and rights have been quietly deeded over to members of the officers corps. The landowners and manufacturers, who traditionally formed the country's ruling elite, are embittered about being cut out of the game and occasionally refer to the once-subservient military as their "Frankenstein." While they place some hope on Reagan's Caribbean Basin initiative and its plans to pump more money into the private sector, many claim the plan is too little too late.

Guevara's election could easily precipitate another wave of capital flight in a country that in 1981 alone lost more than \$225 million in foreign reserves. The Reagan administration has tried for months to find a justification for providing military assistance to Guatemala's hard-pressed armed forces, but has been blocked by the undemocratic image of the Lucas Garcia government and the country's savage record on human rights. It is doubtful that Guevara's victory, which is expected to be confirmed in the Congress over the next few weeks, will help them out on either score.

Nelson Santana reports regularly on Central American affairs.



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ITALY

Socialists flirt with Reagan

By Diana Johnstone

R O M E

FRANCO BASSANINI IS A YOUNG Rome university professor elected to the Italian parliament on the Socialist Party (PSI) ticket. On Oct. 2, he objected when the party caucus was instructed by PSI first secretary Bettino Craxi to vote in favor of unconditional agreement to station Cruise nuclear missiles in Sicily.

Bassanini thought Craxi should at least have consulted the party's policy-making bodies, which when last heard from had preferred to link the missile decision to arms negotiations, along the lines of other European socialist parties. In protest, Bassanini and six other Socialist deputies announced they would abstain from the vote.

This by no means prevented the House from approving the coalition government's foreign policy, missiles and all. But as Bassanini left the floor, PSI administrator Giorgio Gangi rushed at him shouting, "You are a shit face!" With parliamentarians and reporters looking on, Gangi then slapped Bassanini in the face. Surprised but calm, Bassanini responded by telling Gangi, "You must not have more convincing arguments."

The next day, Bassanini and 16 other Socialists, including several respected veterans of anti-fascist resistance, issued an "appeal to Socialists" complaining that Craxi had abolished internal party democracy and lowered the party's standards of political morality. The PSI, they said, had a special duty "to propose a kind of politics capable of restoring faith in democracy, especially among young people. For that, political morals must not diverge from ordinary morals." Instead, the dissidents noted, the PSI is increasingly associated with obscure financial deals and with whitewashing its members named in the far-reaching P-2 secret Masonic lodge scandal.

Craxi called the appeal the work of "shady small-time dealers and political tramps." He also termed it "senile frustrations" that got attention only because it was part of a vast plot against the PSI.

A few days later, the PSI control commission declared that Bassanini and six other dissidents had "put themselves out of the party." That same week in Paris, Secretary General George Marchais was using the exact procedure to expel Henri Fiszbin and his fellow Eurocommunists from the French Communist Party. In both cases, the expelled minorities are champions of left unity and of independence from both rival superpower blocs.

The telegram summoning the Bassanini groups to defend themselves before the central control commission was sent one hour after the time they were told to appear. Old Socialists were unanimously shocked by the unprecedented "Stalinism" of Craxi's procedure against "a respected group of Socialists." Old-timers recalled that even in the '50s the Italian Communist Party expelled its dissidents more courteously.

Out of proportion.

In a recent interview with *In These Times*, Bassanini explained why "Craxi's reaction was extremely out of proportion to the importance of the small minority we represented. The reason was that he had just succeeded in getting the American embassy to send a report to Washington that the Socialist Party was completely normalized, that it was now a moderate right-wing party with no left-wing people remaining who might cause trouble. Whereas in the Christian Democratic Party there was still a left minority seeking collaboration with the Communists. Craxi was worried that our action might undercut the claim that the PSI was normalized."

Craxi's efforts to win Reagan's approval are the topic of gossip in Rome

political circles. "The news of Reagan's election was expected to plunge the whole Italian left, Socialists included, into gloom," Bassanini recalled. "On the contrary, in an election night television panel, the Socialist Party's economic affairs spokesman Francesco Forte immediately came out praising Reagan's economic and social policy. Forte said Reagan had understood correctly that the welfare state was through—that social services, welfare expenditures and assistance to poor people had to be eliminated in order to make room for profits in private industry."

Craxi himself "is more ambiguous," Bassanini added, "since he is concerned with hanging onto workers' votes, at the same time he is wooing the bourgeoisie—not just the productive bourgeoisie of entrepreneurs, but what we in Italy call the 'parasite' bourgeoisie of real estate speculators and so on, the right-wing bourgeoisie."

Gangi—the man who slapped Bassanini—was one of a series of personal envoys sent to Washington by Craxi in an attempt to set up a meeting with Reagan.

But the Craxi-Reagan meeting scheduled for last autumn still has not taken place. Did something change? Bassanini answered, "Maybe the Christian Democrats managed to get back in the good graces of the Reagan administration. Now Craxi is trying to give advice to Mr. Reagan by taking the same position as the Socialist International on El Salvador, very critical of Reagan administration policy."

But the advice is about Italy, not El Salvador.

Bassanini has heard from friends still in the PSI that Craxi said he didn't care about El Salvador. What interested him was to "let Reagan know that he can't expect to have the support of the Socialist Party in Italy unless he makes a clear choice and pays the price. And the price is visible support to Craxi's bid to be prime minister."

A system that binds.

The PSI, Bassanini said, "is trying to take the place of the Christian Democrats in the same power system—a system that binds together major industries that are privately owned but live off government subsidies, and state-controlled industries run by party men who are put there to do party business, to raise money for the party treasuries and give jobs to party people."

"The Socialist Party is now the party with the greatest number of local and national elected officials in Italy," said Bassanini. And this is achieved with only a national total of about 12 percent of the

Socialist leaders are ready to back Reagan's policies if he supports Craxi's bid to be prime minister.

vote, "for if the PSI is ready to govern with the Christian Democrats in the national government in Rome and in towns with a moderate majority, it is also ready to govern with the PCI in towns with a left majority. This way it can maximize its power. This was put in theoretical terms by Mr. Craxi when he said the political strategy of the Socialist Party was to 'assure the country's governability.' The state, the municipalities, the regions, the banks, the state industries, must all be governed."

"And to govern," he added, "what is fundamental is the central function of the Socialist Party. The majority can be on the left or the right. Thus the Socialist

Party, more than other parties, can reward its militants with choice jobs. Political objectives are completely replaced by a pure and simple drive for power. In Italy, this is called a process of 'Americanization' of the Socialist Party. The PSI is getting to resemble a U.S. party, with men of both the left and the right, representing different interests, with no clear political project."

Two years ago, Bassanini warned that

Expelled Socialist Franco Bassanini is a champion of left unity and of independence from both rival superpower blocs.



Diana Johnstone

the PSI was undergoing a "biological mutation." This began with the center-left coalition with the Christian Democrats in the '60s, when the PSI began to imitate Christian Democratic means and methods. The experience produced a younger generation of administrators, party officials, who are now in charge, pragmatists who see political action solely as a means to increase power through social control.

The Italian Socialist Party, Bassanini recalled, was always considered an anomaly in Europe. While other socialist parties were almost all social democratic, accepting capitalism, the Italian Socialist Party always fought for socialist transformation of society. "Now we are in a strange situation. The anomaly of Italian socialism seems to be the exact opposite. Italian socialism has moved to the right of European socialism, at the very moment when a Socialist party in France has chosen a path of socialist transformation, when debate is going on in Germany and Sweden to seek new ways to overcome the crisis affecting social democracy and the capitalist system. In Italy, on the con-

trary, the Socialist Party has chosen to be the prop for a ruling majority about to topple over."

The PSI return to coalition with the Christian Democrats was justified as a tactical step on the way to bringing the Communists into a "national unity" coalition of practically everybody, in preparation for a "left alternative" based on alliance between Socialists and Communists. The April 1981 Palermo Congress officially reaffirmed that strategy, but in fact the leadership, supported by a majority, has switched to a strategy of leading a central "laic" bloc representing the same interests and social classes long represented by the Christian Democrats.

Yet since the left victory in France, since the PCI break with Moscow, the "left alternative" is more feasible than when it was decided in Turin, [a 1978

Congress of dissident PSI members]" said Bassanini. "The left in Italy is deeply rooted in institutions. It is certainly in much better shape than the left in France when Mitterrand adopted the strategy of unity, or than in Greece."

But under Craxi's leadership, the social composition of the PSI has changed. The membership turnover has been enormous. Workers have been leaving, mostly dropping out of political activism altogether. They have been replaced by middle-class people, including large numbers of executives of state-controlled enterprises who see the PSI as a good career connection.

Left socialists still in the party hope that the Craxi line will eventually be defeated by reality. They recall that after World War II, the U.S. came up with the Marshall Plan to keep the left from coming to power in Italy. No such bonanza is to be expected in the crisis of the '80s. Italian voters who expect politicians with Washington's stamp of approval to come up with economic benefits for the country may be disappointed.

“Is freedom we making!”

By Thomas Brom



For the first time in their lives, the people of Grenada are actually involved in education, local planning, workplace democracy and national construction.



ST. GEORGE'S, GRENADA

AS THE LATE AFTERNOON sun throws shadows across the waterfront, an army jeep squeals around the Carenage road and jerks to a halt. Two soldiers jump out onto the deserted wharf, AK-47s ready as they scan the building tops. A government patrol boat approaches about 30 feet offshore and drops anchor. With no sign yet of the approaching motorcade, the militiamen lay out on the deck and wait.

The Julien Fedon Third Anniversary National Maneuver has been going on

rage in the back country.

After three days without food the troops are now converging on St. George's for a massive rally and demonstration of strength. By dusk the line of trucks is a mile long, each carrying several exhausted men and women with.

But this is still the Caribbean, the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) of Grenada—which was founded on the year old March 13—has not forgotten its cultural roots. By 6 p.m., a festive atmosphere has gathered on the St. George's waterfront. Many people dressed in their best. Before the line of trucks is through the dusk, the sounds of calypso and reggae can be heard over the water. The militia is bringing a band, the troops singing and shouting the slogans of the revolution. “We maneuver to manners Revolutionaries,” they shout. “Let dem go bury dem in de sea.” Manners (discipline) for Reagan cowboys.

The first militia units climb down to the pier to dance and parade held high. In the darkness, the surges over the trucks, families are laughing and embracing. The focus on a portable speaker's post set precariously in the road in front of a construction site. First Selwyn St. John, minister of national mobilization, then Prime Minister Maurice Bishop leads the crowd in chants, praising strength and solidarity. “Long live the fighting people of Free Grenada! Forward Ever, Backward Never!”

The speeches and songs continue the night, carrying across the water to St. George's harbor to the tourists and guest houses perched on the cliffs to the south. “Stand up, Free Grenada! Land of nutmeg, land of banana.”

The morning after, business is as usual, although a bit later. On his way to work in St. George's, Patrick S. says, “Maneuver was tough, man. I'm 22, he is a squad leader of his unit in the village of New Hampshire not far from town. ‘I had to tell the comrade to eat food today. No time for Mr. P.’ You can't stop for dinner if the it comes.”

After the 1979 revolution, S. joined the National Youth Organization, which along with the other popular organizations on the island form the backbone of the militias. Teachers, students, farmers and trade unionists alike devote one day a week to military training armed with a mix of automatic weapons and trained by Cuban advisors.

“The only security for the revolution is the people,” Superville says. “There are a thousand coves on this island with counters (counter-revolutionaries) to attack us.”

Grenada's business leaders for the most part stayed inside during the maneuvers, with varying degrees of tolerance for the mass mobilization. “I hear the noise from my house,” says Payne, director of the Organization of American States office in St. George's. “You know, Grenadians will jump on any bus. They like an outing.”

A member of the Grenada Hotel Association adds, “All these young men with guns worries us. Besides, it's very discreet of the government to hold these maneuvers in the middle of the tourist season.” But another innkeeper, who has owned the island since 1951, dismisses the military hardware with a wave of his hand. “It's just like carnival,” he says. “What your country doesn't understand is that it's just the government's saying that people here are behind the revolution. And that is true. You keep your sense of humor.”

It doesn't take long in this be-

all weekend—an island-wide mobilization of the regular army and national militia in preparation for an invasion from the U.S. This is the biggest maneuver yet, a response to the U.S. Marines' mock invasion of Vieques Island last year and the continued saber-rattling from Washington. Troops have dug in along the beaches to the north and south, while transport trucks covered with camouflage branches roar around the tiny island and mock battles

eastern Caribbean island of 110,000 people to discover that U.S. policy toward Grenada has neither a sense of humor nor a sense of perspective. By U.S. standards the island is desperately poor—the average annual wage is barely \$500. Nutmeg, cocoa and bananas are the three biggest export crops, and all three have been hit hard by bad weather and declining prices on the international market. In 1981, Grenada's total export earnings amounted to only \$19.6 million (U.S.), or barely enough to buy the tail section of a B-1 bomber.

Grenada has virtually no manufacturing sector. At the new Agro-Industries Plant in True Blue, women peel tumeric and mango by hand before preparing hot sauces and chutneys. The island relies on tourism for the foreign exchange necessary to buy imported oil and manufactured goods, but has a total of only 750 hotel rooms. A fire in the Holiday Inn kitchen last October closed the hotel, taking 186 units—half the first-class rooms in Grenada—with it.

Until the revolution, Grenada had one secondary school, no fishing industry, no public transport, worn and pot-holed roads and a tiny airport located on the far side of the island from St. George's and the tourist beaches. Country people still come to Market Square in St. George's for cooking charcoal, sold in burlap sacks by an old woman whose relatives cut and burn the wood themselves. All together, this struggling nation hardly seems a threat to the national security of the U.S.

Yet something drives President Reagan and Secretary of State Alexander Haig to block financing of the \$71 million airport at Point Salines, to refuse the credentials of the Grenadian ambassador and to send Milan Bish, a Nebraska businessman, as ambassador to the Eastern Caribbean Countries with orders to exclude Grenada from diplomatic channels. Something drives this administration to charge, as President Reagan did before the Organization of American States last month, that Grenada is caught "in the tightening grip of the totalitarian left."

The State Department's primary concern is that the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) is tainted by assistance from Cuba. Grenada has indeed received Cuban assistance, from the 20-member medical team sent shortly after the revolution to 11 fishing trawlers, money and equipment for the new airport, construction teams, weapons and military advisors. Grenada—and Cuba—make no attempt to hide this aid.

The Cuban workers, some 300 volunteers housed in barracks at the airport and advisors to various ministries in St. George's, are easily spotted wandering through town on a rare day off. The airport workers have also helped dig a gravel quarry and build an asphalt plant for the 9,000-foot runway. They work 12-hour shifts around the clock, teaching Grenadians technical skills and work habits never learned during the French and British colonial governments.

Located in a sea teeming with fish, Grenada nevertheless had no commercial fishing industry until Cuba donated old trawlers over the past year. There was also no fish processing plant in Grenada, so salt-cod had to be imported from England to supplement the local catch of flying fish and sea bass.

Last April, the PRG set up a National Fisheries Corporation, including a fisheries school and a fish processing plant in True Blue. Dale St. John, plant manager, is a 22-year-old woman from the National Youth Organization who was trained in salting and smoking fish for four months in Cuba.

The Cubans are not a total success on the island—one teenager from Grand Anse said he quit the militia because the Cubans acted "too much above them"—but for the most part their offers of help and solidarity are warmly welcomed. The Grenada Hotel Association, for example, is one of the airport's biggest boosters—Cuban workers or no. The airport offers the promise of attracting jumbo jets from the U.S. and Europe, as well as modern shipping facilities for Grenada's perishable export crops.

For the past year, popular organizations in Grenada have come on Sunday outings to watch the runway progress. The Point Salines construction site is impressive: entire hillsides have been leveled by explosives and heavy equipment; mangrove swamps, salt ponds and part of Hardy Bay filled in to create level ground; shipload after shipload of Cuban concrete brought in by truck from the dock in St. George's.

"When our people come here and say, 'Look how this place change, man,' they are looking directly at the future of our country," says Bernard Coard, finance minister of the PRG. "They are seeing how that shining runway leads straight into real change and prosperity."

But all the State Department can see is red. The runway is too long, it contends, for mere commercial use. U.S. reaction to the airport appeared first in a report coauthored by Roger Fontaine, a Latin America adviser on the National Security Council staff. "The airfield site," he wrote in 1980, "commands the deep-water channel alongside the island of Grenada through which flows 52 percent of all imported U.S. oil." Presumably Grenada, or Cuban aircraft, could threaten the security of those sea routes.

Prime Minister Maurice Bishop has not been shy in responding to the U.S. position. "These people want us to lift up our country, move it out of the Caribbean Sea, and see if we can find a place in the Far East or Africa to hide it so we won't be in front of their oil routes," he told a rally in November. Selwyn Strachan says bluntly, "We have no agreement for Cubans to use the airport. Your government simply refuses to believe that."

People's democracy.

The second concern of the State Department, repeated and developed by much of the U.S. press, is that Grenada has become a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship, a potential threat to other islands in the Caribbean. And here the administration has a list of evidence, including alleged human rights violations, failure to hold national elections and the shutting down of several newspapers in St. George's.

What in fact is occurring in Grenada is far more complicated—a genuine social revolution, messy and rough around the edges, involving all aspects of this predominantly rural society. At its heart is national mobilization and people's democracy—a direct, participatory form of government well suited to a small nation.

"People's democracy" could be dismissed as just so much rhetoric printed up by the New Jewel Movement (NJM), the revolutionary party that toppled the government of UFO-enthusiast Eric Gairy with barely 47 people and two rented cars in March 1979. But it's real. For the first time in their lives, Grenadians are actually involved in education, local planning, workplace democracy and national construction. "We never have such freedom in our lifetime in Grenada," as road cleaner Thomas has put it. "Is freedom we making here now."

Across the island, villages are being transformed by dozens of popular action groups. Haig will never believe it. President Reagan will never believe it. But the

meetings of the youth organization, the women's organization, the teachers' groups, the workers councils and the parish councils are open for all to attend.

"I don't know what democracy is, but I think what's going on here is pretty close to it," says a St. George's bar owner who returned to Grenada after living in Sweden for 18 years.

On a Monday night last month, some 200 Grenadians arrived on foot and by private mini-buses at an old hotel overlooking St. George's. Butler House stands on the Ballast Ground, a rocky promontory jutting into the harbor. It was built in the mid-'50s as a movie set for *Island in the Sun*, later becoming the first modern hotel in the eastern Caribbean. But "The Islander" fell on hard times. The owners left it to the goats feeding on the front lawn before it was renamed by the PRG for Tubal "Buzz" Butler, a Grenadian labor leader in the '30s, and used to house several government ministries.

On this night a zonal council is convening to discuss the national budget for the coming year. The very idea sounds preposterous within the context of U.S. politics. But here the gathering ignites like a New England town meeting. Here people with the briefest schooling are challenging government officials and technical staff on each detail of a budget they hold in their hands.

The group soon breaks into workshops for workers, youth organization members, women's organization members and the non-affiliated. Comments and discussion continue into the night—there should be price controls on essential goods, inspectors to watch the shopkeepers, a tax on rum, less waste by the government ministries. Some argue that officials of the government should not get a housing allowance, since other workers do not. Most people want one of the 26 new buses bought from Japan to be assigned to their districts, but agree that some must wait until the country can afford more buses. The workers group reports back that it wants more emulation committees at the job sites to spur greater production.

Primary critics of the PRG in the U.S. and the English-speaking Caribbean continue to call for parliamentary elections in Grenada. But Selwyn Strachan says from his bare office above the national courthouse chambers that "we are finished with the old parliamentary model. We have abandoned that Westminster foolishness for good. Yes, we will hold elections. They are definitely on the agenda. But they are not a priority. Pulling a lever for two seconds every five years does not mean you have a democracy. First we have to educate people so they understand democracy from the inside out."

The leaders of the NJM make a strong case for their "revolutionary democracy," especially in light of the dismal economic conditions throughout most of the West Indies. Westminster parliaments in the Caribbean are some of the oldest in the Western Hemisphere, yet the people they govern are frequently illiterate and unskilled, servile to rich tourists and easily manipulated by a handful of "saltfish politicians wearing robes."

"Every five years they come to you, beat steelband and give you \$20 to get you to vote," says Roy Cooper, a mason at Queen's Park quarry. "They get people divided and fighting each other." Prime Minister Bishop, himself an opposition MP before the revolution, said last year, "No one ever went to Gairy's Parliament. No one knew what was happening there, no one had any real rights that could be enforced." A government pamphlet makes the PRG's position plain: "In the Caribbean, as in all the Third World, the two-party or multi-party sys-

tem is a hindrance to our development."

That in a nutshell constitutes Grenada's "threat" to the region. With cutlass and hoe, Grenada is creating a different kind of society based on the active participation of the working majority in the direction of the nation. It is a far cry from the docile islands of the U.S., British and French Caribbean and the first revolution on an English-speaking island. The PRG's development strategy seems close to the Sandinista model in Nicaragua—a leading state sector, followed by cooperatives and the private sector, dedicated to national self-reliance.

National security.

The NJM knows that there will be no Godfather for Grenada, no colonial power like those behind Puerto Rico, Barbados or Martinique, no socialist subsidy underpinning the Cuban economy. "We have to be practical," Strachan says. "We have to build, provide basic services and involve our people. That is our only national security."

To be sure, the "Revo" in Grenada is not a dinner party. Leadership of the PRG is still largely in the hands of the same six men who organized the New Jewel Movement in 1975, and were subsequently badly beaten up by Eric Gairy's "Mongoose Gang." Some 100 political detainees arrested after the revolution remain in prison. Strachan claims they are common criminals and will be dealt with by the courts. Opponents of the PRG have been harassed, and the resident reporter for Reuters, Alister Hughes, has had his car confiscated and phone removed. Hughes and 25 others opposed to the PRG opened *The Grenadian Voice* last year, but the paper was shut down by the government after the second issue. Yet Hughes continues to file stories critical of the PRG from the telex office in St. George's.

"After all, this is a revolution," says one of the island's most prominent hotel owners. "If you don't go along, you will be detained. Your mother will have to water the vegetables. That's the way it is."

"It is far too late now for U.S. intervention," he adds. "Cuba has armed this country, and the people support the revolution. We are definitely moving toward socialism."

But it's not going to be easy for the PRG to build socialism in a hostile sea during the worldwide recession. Tourism revenue in 1981 declined 20 percent, and the hotels during peak season this year were barely half full. Only three cruise ships a week still stop at St. George's to discharge passengers for a day of shopping and lying out on Grand Anse beach. Before the revolution, there were two such visits a day. Osgood, a 15-year-old youth selling toy steeldrums on the Caranga, considers making \$3 (U.S.) "not a bad day."

A lot of hope, revolutionary and otherwise, hangs on opening the Point Salines airport early in 1983. It could revive tourism, stimulate the export industries and free Grenada from dependence on thru-transport from Barbados and Trinidad. The PRG announced with great fanfare that the Holiday Inn will spend \$5 million to reopen this year. A public relations firm has been hired to promote the island's charms in New York. Roads are being repaved, community centers built, fishing and agricultural co-ops organized. *Grow more food / Build the revolution*, the billboards exhort. *Not an hour without production, not a minute without the people*.

"All around them, people can see progress," Strachan says confidently. "What can the opposition say? They have nothing to organize around. So let the imperialists come."

Next week: Reagan plans holiday in Barbados while the U.S. navy exercises in the Caribbean.

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

NOT TAX BREAKS

NORM FRUCHTER'S ANALYSIS OF THE economic roots of problems of the Chicago schools (*ITT*, Feb. 3) is in error.

Fruchter has written insightfully about what goes on inside classrooms, but that doesn't make him an expert on school finance. He believes that "a combination of tax forgiveness programs for Chicago corporations—failure to collect billions in corporate personal property taxes, low corporate tax assessments and tax breaks for new commercial construction—increased the system's reliance on school district bonds." This reliance set the School Board up for a corporate takeover when the banks stopped buying the bonds.

This is dead wrong. The corporate personal property tax, which was replaced in 1979 by an extremely progressive tax on corporate income, was undercollected, but by millions, not billions. Low corporate tax assessments also are not the problem; since 1972 Cook County has followed a classification system with corporations assessed at 2½ times the rate of homeowners (as a percentage of market value). This was adopted after proposals by the grass roots Citizens Action Program (CAP), which I co-chaired; Cook County is the only Illinois county with a split roll.

And there are no tax breaks for new commercial construction. An abatement law is on the books, but not one single project has ever qualified in Chicago; the Hilton Hotels have been lobbying for two years to be the first.

Not tax breaks, but an insufficient tax level, has starved Chicago schools. Accumulated deficits of five years brought the School Board to its present woe.

—Paul Booth
International Union Area Director,
AFSCME, Chicago, Ill.

THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION

AS A "LIBERAL" GETTING SLIGHTLY more conservative as time goes on, I subscribe to your newspaper to hear the "other side of the news." Your articles often instruct me, sometimes amuse me and sometimes appall me. This latter was the case when I recently read what Tom Brom had to say about the IRA program. He made two major points: The institution of IRA accounts will relieve companies of their need to negotiate pension plans with their employees; and the much publicized \$1 million the caring saver is to enjoy when he reaches the age at which he can put his hands on the account, will be worth only about \$38,000 in "1982 dollars." There goes our administration (which, God knows, has enough shortcomings), cheating and fooling the unsuspecting populace!

The logic of the "pension plan argument" could, and maybe even was, applied to fight the introduction of Social Security in 1935. While IRA is a voluntary savings program, Social Security is forced upon the employee. Do you really believe that it has reduced the bargaining power of unions for pension plans? And would you favor its abolition in order to exert greater pressure on management to offer better pension plans?

Brom's calculation of what the IRA account would be worth at its maturity is grossly misleading. I do not know whether his calculation is correct—most likely it is. But when he expresses

the \$1 million the saver will receive at a future date in "1982 dollars," then he must also consider that the payments over the years at \$2,000 annually, also will be much smaller—if expressed in 1982 dollars. To give a fair evaluation of the savings you must either express both annual payment and the final retirement sum in actual dollars (when savers will indeed have \$1 million in their accounts) or figure both annual payments and the retirement sum in 1982 dollars. Figured this way, payments in coming years will be in value just a few dollars every year. That is, if you want to be fair.

—Robert Schoenfeld
Bethesda, Md.

Tom Brom replies: Schoenfeld manages to miss the point of the story—that responsibility for setting up retirement accounts is being shifted to the individual. Social Security was a linchpin of the New Deal, saving millions from an impoverished old age. It should be defended. But as its critics never tire of saying, Social Security is not a pension system and cannot replace private pensions unless it is greatly expanded.

As for the "million dollar bonanza" touted by the IRA salesmen, it remains an inflated balloon no matter how you do the calculations. I tried to show that the "present value" of \$1 million accumulated by the year 2017—assuming as the banks do a constant 10 percent inflation during the intervening 35 years—would be a scant \$34,000. True, the yearly contributions would be worth less in today's dollars as well. But the point is that IRAs will not magically create a nation of wealthy retired workers. An IRA is a good tax shelter if you've got the money—but it's not a miracle.

THE DEGRADATION OF THE MARXIST DOGMA

IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY A BACK-HANDED tribute to Marx that John Judis should try to foist his own prejudices off on socialism's first scientific theoretician. But the view that Marx's conception of socialism was framed essentially "in social and political terms rather than economic terms," as Judis asserts, defies a body of evidence so massive that one must reluctantly admire the quixotic foolhardiness that would ignore it.

Not so admirable, however, is the attempt to make this point by playing games with Marx's words. In his reply to David Englestein (*ITT*, Feb. 10), Judis cites the following from Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Program*: "Vulgar socialism has taken over from the bourgeois economists...the presentation of socialism as turning principally upon distribution." This citation is one piece of evidence offered to prove that Marx did not frame his conception of socialism in "economic terms." But an examination of the same passage with the three dots removed and replaced by the original clearly demonstrates the very opposite. Here is what Marx wrote: "Vulgar socialism has taken over from the bourgeois economists the consideration and treatment of distribution as independent of the mode of production and hence the presentation of socialism as turning principally upon distribution."

Clearly the "mode of production" is an economic category. Marx' polemic in the passage cited was with those who define socialism in terms of some conception of equality in the realm of distribution, a notion which "vulgar so-

cialism" continues to advance in our own time. But to Marx, socialism could only be understood as a new mode of production, that is, as a new system of property relations under the terms of which a social formation's economic life was organized. Nor was there anything arbitrary or ahistoric about Marx' approach to the nature of those property relations. They corresponded to a certain level of development of the productive forces in that society. Taken as a whole, this was the materialist underpinning for the revolution in socialist thought of which Marx was the foremost architect. Judis' attempt to prove that this "economic" consideration was not central to all of Marx' work suggests—shall we say—a certain carelessness?

However, Judis' "carelessness" is of less concern than is the politics it serves. Englestein is quite correct in noting that Judis' abuse of Marx is related to a similar absence of materialism concerning the socialist countries in general and the crisis in Poland in particular. By dropping out the economic and substituting instead some of Marx' general speculations on what the human condition would be like after the triumph and consolidation of the new, advanced mode of production, Judis has apparently satisfied himself that "the Soviet Union, China, Poland and Cuba are not socialist" (*ITT*, Jan. 20). As a result, today he sounds the tocsin for a Solidarity which, with the enthusiastic backing of U.S. imperialism, the warhawks of the U.S. labor movement and the Vatican, came perilously close to bringing down a Polish socialism which, battered and weak though it was, nevertheless had broken out of the capitalist orbit and was struggling to stay there.

Isn't it only a matter of time before Judis finds similar socialist virtue in some band of Soviet or Cuban or Vietnamese dissidents who, exploiting contradictions and/or errors in their ruling parties and publicly espousing bourgeois democratic ideals, will find themselves hailed (if not aided) by the likes of Reagan, Haig and Kirkland in their "heroic" attempts to undermine an actual, hard-won socialist revolution?

—Irwin Silber
Oakland, Calif.

Editor's note: In capitalist society, "economic necessity"—the profitability of privately owned enterprise—is the basis of decisions that affect all aspects of society. And economics, a "social science" that came into being with industrial capitalism and is concerned primarily with distribution, reinforces the ability of private capitalists to dominate society by isolating decisions about profitability from the effects such decisions have on the human beings who make up society.

Marx' concept of socialism put the needs of human beings and of society as a whole at center stage. Socialism, as Tony Benn says, means that decisions about how to use the means of production should be made socially, which means with the widest possible popular participation by an educated and politically active citizenry. Thus, Marx' conception of socialism was framed essentially "in social and political terms rather than in economic terms."

Irwin Silber, like others in the post-1917 Communist tradition, prefers the bourgeois formulation. He sees socialism primarily in economic terms, as do the leaders of the Soviet Union, because it enables him to support a variety of socialism that is concerned only with the workings of the "economy." Marx assumed that a socialist society would be more democratic than capitalist society because "economic" decisions would be made consciously to further commonly-shared social goals.

FREE CHOICE

ACCORDING TO JOHN JUDIS, "A cursory inspection of the ERA" supports Betty Friedan's claim that the amendment has nothing to do with sexual behavior, and that by linking it with sexual issues, "feminists helped scare

off many women who might have supported the ERA on its merits" (*ITT*, Feb. 3). Obviously, Judis' inspection was so cursory as to be nonexistent. To say that equal rights for women have nothing to do with sex is like saying that equal rights for workers have nothing to do with money. One of the basic human rights men and a sexist culture have denied women is the right to express our sexuality. Women have been subjected to a double standard of sexual morality, prevented from controlling our fertility, and denied the freedom to assert our sexual needs in relationships with men. At the same time, the triple whammy of economic inequality, homophobia and the vulnerability of women without male "protection" has denied us a free choice between heterosexuality and lesbianism.

As for the strategic question, it was during the most militant phase of radical feminist activism, when women were loudly demanding legal abortion and sexual self-determination, that the ERA breezed through Congress and was ratified by most states. In recent years, NOW and other pro-ERA organizations have pursued a single-issue strategy, deliberately dissociating the ERA campaign from potentially "offensive" issues like abortion and gay rights. In these same years, the amendment has been defeated in state after state. So much for the effectiveness of mealy-mouthed liberal caution.

"Equal rights," in the abstract, is a meaningless phrase. It gains content from the concrete demands of people who are rebelling against unequal treatment. As a socialist, John Judis surely knows this. His foolish distinction between the "merits" of the ERA and its application to women's sexual rights can only reflect a refusal to take feminism seriously.

—Ellen Willis
New York, N.Y.

MORE FAMILY

AS A GAY ACTIVIST, I WAS DELIGHTED with the creation of Friends of Families—seeing it as a smart way to defend the gay community from the attacks of the right. But I take exception to the way that Judis defends Friends of Families.

Lerner never says Defend the Family. Rather, he says, "support people who are in families." That is, it is not an ideological program about whether "the family" is good or bad—it is a practical program for answering the question, "What do people need to make families safe for love and intimacy." As such, Lerner and Friends of Families is agnostic on whether the family is the best or only form of achieving lasting human relationships. Leave that to the philosophers—or to theorists like myself who firmly believe that other and better forms will eventually evolve. The point for us is only this: families, in all of their different forms (including gay families), are the current institutional form within which people actually build their intimate lives, and the place where they will raise children. Given this reality, a politics that attempts to support people as they deal with their actual problems is a politics that can most quickly and safely get people to look at the way the economy, the alienation of work, the existence of patriarchy and the absence of community supports (particularly childcare and full employment) are also primary sources of the breakdown of family life.

One thing that particularly irks me in these discussions in *In These Times* is the suggestion that somehow this pro-families strategy is anti-gay. This assumes that gay people don't have families. Well, most of us have parents, and if our gayness has estranged them or our other relatives—then this is a challenge for a pro-family organization to take up. Judis seems to accept uncritically the idea that gays are not in families, and to reify the category "single" instead of seeing it as an historical product of an alienated time.

—George Montecillo
Oakland, Calif.

SCHOOLING



Good test results are threatening to overwhelm education.

Reading tests a classy device

By Deborah Meier

AT A TIME WHEN PUBLIC schools are widely perceived to be failing, people seek both a cause and a solution to restore confidence. A cheap one, they hope. Focusing on the idea of holding schools, teachers and children strictly "accountable" through the mechanism of standardized testing is such an attempt.

School boards, the media and politicians demand increases in scores. States legislate tests as a means of enforcing "standards." Teachers are assessed, and assess themselves by the scores of their pupils, and parents and children praise or condemn their schools and themselves on this basis. Decisions about promotion, graduation, school organization and curriculum increasingly depend on test scores, which are the accepted coin for describing reality.

Decisions are made by tests even though few of those using tests understand testing in general, the particular ones being used or the way the test data is presented. This is even seen as a virtue: tests are objective, mysterious, beyond our control.

But democratic control of schools, which accountability implies, depends on something else. If we are to be judged, sorted and organized according to tests, we better understand them.

Reluctant skeptic.

I always did well on standardized tests, so my skepticism about them grew reluctantly. And having an aversion to conspiracy theories, I assumed that expertly put together instruments could not be seriously flawed.

The first time I looked at a test carefully was when my 8-year-old son did badly on one. His poor score puzzled me because he was an avid reader. Before he took the next test I went over a sample with him. He placed the palm of

his hand over the reading passages when he was selecting the right choices. I asked him why. "There wouldn't be any point if you could look back," he replied. "Good reading" to him was seeing how much you remembered. Anything else seemed like "cheating." I had a hard time persuading him to peek.

That same year I began teaching in Harlem, full of confidence that I could teach any child to read. I persuaded the principal to let me supervise four classes from kindergarten to third grade. When the first kindergarten reached 2nd grade I expected impressive test results. I was startled to discover that children who read decently scored badly.

I proceeded to tape hours of interviews with young children, going over the test with them. I discovered there were students who read the paragraphs fluently, discussed the contents intelligently, but still got the answers wrong. Reading skill helped, but was far from sufficient. Children often got the answers wrong for reasons that demonstrated an intelligent determination to find meaning in what they read.

Here are some examples:

Some days I should stay in bed. Today was one of those days.

"Good morning," Mom said. "Don't you have a clean shirt to wear? That one looks dirty."

"Sam," said Dad. "Your shoes are on the wrong feet."

I got dressed all over again. By the time I ate breakfast, my cereal was soggy. Then I stopped, as usual, for Bill. He was not home. He had already gone to school. I walked there alone. When I got to school, Bill yelled, "Here comes Sam, the snail." Why was Sam so slow getting to school?

- ___ He overslept
- ___ He had to get dressed twice
- ___ He fooled around
- ___ He did not like school

The children found reasonable defenses for all four answers, but most concluded that "Sam was fooling

around." The correct answer is: He had to get dressed twice.

To keep means to ___ hold ___ carry

Derrick explained, "When I want to keep something, I *carry* it." "No," argued Yvette, "when I want to keep something, I *hold* it."

An architect's most important tools are his—

- (e) pencil and paper
- (f) buildings
- (g) ideas
- (h) bricks

Most selected "pencil and paper." Was it superior "reading" ability that led

a few to the "right" answer, "ideas"? Choose the word that *best* completes each sentence.

A sage individual is

- 5. touchy
- 6. old
- 7. testy
- 8. wise

Did Mark's selection of "old" indicate poor reading, a misunderstanding of the task or his respect for age?

The frequency of a sound determines its—

- 1. treble
- 2. volume
- 3. pitch
- 4. harmony

Are seven-year-olds who do not possess this specific musical knowledge "poor readers"?

I read the passages and questions aloud, only to find that many children did not do better when entirely relieved of the "reading." Their difficulty related to unfamiliarity with content, the specific reasoning assumed or the nature of the task.

It was much trickier than I had supposed to test the skills of "reading." Reading always involves a particular subject matter. The material in these second-grade reading tests had a subject matter and a specialized terminology to describe it. My seven-year-olds were penalized for not knowing that a tree trunk has "rings" inside (not the kind you wear on your finger), that oceans have tides (that go out every 12 hours), and that there's a hundred years between 1865 and 1965; facts unlikely to be found in a second-grade curriculum (unless the teacher had peeked at the test ahead of time)!

My alarm was compounded by the impact testing was having on school reforms. A promising movement aimed at intellectually purposeful curriculum was being replaced by a focus on narrower and more trivial subskills in the forms of hundreds of short reading "tasks" followed by multiple choices. Schools became coaching institutions for tests. It was as though we tried to improve vision by coaching children to take eye tests!

What do the scores mean?

Part of the power of testing derives from its apparent precision. But the scores given to parents and teachers (4.7 or 67th percentile) are, according to test publisher's manuals, only rough approximations, since "measurement error" is substantial for any individual. A fluctuation of as much as "six months" up or down is not unusual if a child were to retake any test. But schools never treat test data as though they were aware of this.

The biggest irony, however, was that this effort to improve scores could not lead to any overall change for American children, or even an upward shift by any

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DIALOG

Belizeans support the PUP's policies

By David Helvarg

TED ARANDA'S CLAIM (Dialog, Feb. 17) that newly independent Belize would have been better off remaining a British colony accurately reflects the politics of his father's United Democratic Party (UDP). But his claim that I made no effort to get the UDP's views is off base. In Belize, in 1980 and 1981, I had numerous interviews with representatives of both the Peoples United Party (PUP) of Premier George Price and the opposition UDP, and also with representatives of British, U.S. and other interests. If I "conveyed the impression that the PUP is progressive and the UDP conservative" it's an impression with which most UDP members have no problem.

In 1980 Premier Price went to Nicaragua to take part in celebrations marking the first anniversary of the Sandinista revolution. Immediately UDP flyers in Belize showed a photo of Price standing on the reviewing stand next to Fidel Castro and various Sandinista leaders. "Price leads Belize to Independence and Communism" reads one pamphlet. "Communist elements in the (PUP) government are demanding immediate independence in order to allow communist guerrillas in Guatemala to infiltrate...and allow the governments of Nicaragua, Castro's Cuba and Panama to take control of Belize," read another—put out as part of the campaign for Aranda's "progressive" UDP.

In fact the mildly social democratic PUP had no difficulty overcoming this red-baiting attack. It beat the UDP in the December 1980 Belize City municipal elections, as it had in four consecutive national elections since 1964.

The PUP has always made independence from Great Britain a cornerstone of its platform. The people's right to choose independence was reflected in these elections. George Price's "wide popularity" caused the UDP youth-wing to resort to anti-independence rioting, vandalism and looting last spring in an attempt to delay a final agreement.

Two UDP businessmen I spoke with talked of "packing their bags" not out of fear of the right-wing generals in Guatemala City (as Aranda implies) but out of distrust of Said Musa and Asad Shoman, two left-wing ministers in the PUP government who have advocated a more "grassroots and socialist approach" to reorganizing the economy.

There is no question that Belize's economy is in poor shape (although the distribution of wealth is far more equitable than in most Central American nations). But the roots of this economic malaise have less to do with PUP policies than with the regional/world economy (low prices for agro-export, high prices for imported fuels) and with more than a century of British colonial exploitation and neglect.

But the British have provided and will continue to provide military security against Guatemalan encroachment. And if Britain fails to provide protection, Mexico, Belize's northern neighbor, has

right answers to get the same "score" or to produce a more difficult test.

As long as we use tests designed to produce a rank order, and a scoring system that merely informs people of their position, there cannot be a legitimate increase in scores. Everyone can and should read better, but our measuring instrument promises never to tell us if we are.

How tests are designed.

If a test score is simply a statement about a child's place in this ranking order, it is only as accurate as the test-maker's ability to predict how all the rest of the children in the country would respond to the same test. If they're wrong about the others, then no individual score is of any value.

The testmakers must figure out how to select items that will stand up to their claim. In years of research and field trials, they must select items that will be answered wrong by predetermined percentages of children and that are not easily susceptible to coaching, since that would lead to inaccurate predictions. The validity of the scores depends upon the guarantee that all students will have the same troubles as the sampled population used to develop the tests. I tell my students before testing sessions: "Remember, they had to find some questions you wouldn't know the answer to. Don't be upset when you come upon them. Maybe you can even outsmart them." The items were selected to produce a predetermined scoring pattern (a "normal" curve) with students falling into their appropriate places on the upper or lower ends of this curve.

But what's their appropriate place? Who belongs where? This, too, must be predetermined and other tests—reading as well as IQ tests—are the external standard or validation of appropriateness. It's much the same process used by developers of early IQ tests—upon whose biases all current IQ tests still rest. For them, an item correctly answered by



PREMIER GEORGE PRICE POSES WITH FIDEL CASTRO ON SANDINISTA PLATFORM IN NICARAGUA.

PRICE LEADS BELIZE TO INDEPENDENCE AND COMMUNISM

REPORTS from London state that George Price has asked the British Government to start INDEPENDENCE TALKS in January 1981 with or without a Guatemalan settlement.

INDEPENDENCE would be proclaimed in September 1981 and Belize would become a member of the United Nations in October.

AN OPPOSITION Belize City Council will defend Belize as a whole from premature independence leading to Communism. Communists in the Price Government are leading the campaign for immediate independence.

THE UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY BELIEVES IN AND SUPPORTS BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS AS EMBODIED IN THE SEVEN PILLARS OF THE PARTY.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. SECURITY | 2. FREEDOM |
| 3. DEMOCRACY | 4. PRIVATE ENTERPRISE |
| 5. SOCIAL JUSTICE | 6. FATHERHOOD OF GOD |
| 7. BROTHERHOOD OF MAN | |

It makes no sense to contend that colonial status is a "progressive" choice in Belize.

guaranteed the country's territorial integrity. Even the Organization of American States, including the U.S., has recognized Belize's rights, in part out of fear that should they fail to protect Belize Nicar-

agua and Cuba would quickly extend fraternal aid. Fear of revolutionary forces coming to the aid of an independent Belize also seems to be a motive force of the UDP, few of whose members have expressed regrets, to me or any other member of the press, about President Reagan's interventions in Central America.

It may be that operating as a free and democratic nation poses many risks for the people of Belize, but Aranda's (and the UDP's) contention that continued colonial status is a "progressive" alternative turns meaning on its head and perpetrates the "self-colonizing mentality" of these Tory subjects.

We have accepted a measure for holding schools "accountable" that by definition tries to be impervious to schooling. Of course, test makers are not perfect: tests can be outsmarted. Certain kinds of teaching and testing practices do cause score "inflations" in the short run (until the testmakers readjust the scores or the tests). Coaching to the tests has become increasingly common practice everywhere, with an occasional cheating scandal. But even worse than coaching or cheating are school "reforms" instituted in the hopes of raising scores.

The *American Educator* reports that for lower-income children, the most "effective classrooms" (with higher test scores) are characterized by an emphasis on "simple-answer or multiple-choice questions instead of encouraging pupils to analyze, synthesize or evaluate." Lower-income children, we're informed, do best "when teacher-student interaction" is simple-minded. For wealthier students, on the other hand, more intellectually stimulating practices "work." Such children do best in "highly-cognitive classrooms." This conclusion is a vivid example of how testing sabotages the ideal of egalitarianism. By a sleight-of-hand the measuring instrument has ended up defining goals. Who's become accountable to whom?

We end up with a fraudulent picture of our educational problems as well as how we can solve them. But the greatest disservice of all is that in the name of objective science, it leads teachers and parents to distrust their ability to know, and thus defend, their own children. It's like people who take marriage tests to see if they are happily married. "Know thyself" has become a matter of scanning a computer print-out. Nothing is more harmful to democracy than the withering away of the expectation that it takes human beings to make human judgments.

Deborah Meier is director of the Central Park East School in New York.

Testing

Continued from page 11

substantial subgroup. By definition, half the students on these kinds of tests must always score "above" and half "below grade level." It's as pointless to demand that most students score in the top half as it would to insist that all teams in the American League make it into the playoffs.

The scores on standardized tests are only stand-ins for rank-order. They indicate where any particular child or group stands in relationship to everyone else in that grade. Grade equivalents—4.6, 5.3—are derived from rank order. If we greatly improved reading ability or testing ability, the test makers are obliged by the rules of their game either to require more

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INPRINT

MUSIC

Pete Seeger's sound of social action

How Can I Keep From Singing:
Pete Seeger

By David King Dunaway
McGraw-Hill, 386 pp., \$14.95

By Bob Cohen

For many of us growing up in the '50s and '60s Pete Seeger was our main teacher, coach and principal in that alternative school of hard knocks called The Movement. Pete was not only a symbol of all that was good and honest, but also he was right there along side us, marching in his thirsty boots, singing out, lining out our parts, keeping the boat and keeping the faith.

Dunaway captures much of the spirit, courage and dedication of the man, as well as shedding some insight into his political and cultural roots. He has done a fine job in describing the issues that whirled around Seeger during the McCarthy days and the blacklisting times that followed. He also makes several important points about Pete's contribution to American culture. Pete, along with Alan Lomax, Charity Bailey, Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie and others, brought the rich undercurrent of our music up to the surface and got us all to share vicariously in the lives of sailors, cotton-pickers, railroaders, prisoners, lovers and hobos. Though not a linguist, he sang in many different languages and played tunes from all over the world. His main vision throughout all this is that people should be making their own music.

Dunaway said on Pacifica's WBAL-FM he wanted to give young people an example of courage and tenacity as shown in Pete's life. Pete, in a footnote to a recent column in the folk-song magazine *Sing Out!* says that he feels the book turned out mostly as psycho-history and is just so much "spinach" (at least he didn't say "baloney"). Pete had hoped Dunaway would write "of how I'd tried to combine music and social action, to the hoped-for improvement of both." Although Dunaway does give some glimpses into a rather violent (through rare) temper, and some periods of bitter pessimism on Pete's part, his book is far from an Albert Goldman psycho-hysterical expose or a psycho-historical view of Pete's life.

Dunaway does comment on music and social action. Unfortunately, it requires much more discussion than he gives it. Nevertheless it casts an interesting perspective on the subject, one that may have gotten Seeger's goat.

"Seeger faced the dilemma pointed out by poet Stephen Spender—those writing revolutionary songs or poetry must confront the antimaterialist form of their own art," he writes. "The most moving political songs actually distract listeners from social reality, as the music and the performance spellbind their audience. 'Music is the most powerful of all the idealist

drugs except religion,' Spender wrote. Thus, Pete's best political songs evoked not the bitterness of repression but the glory of its solution, the potential beauty of a world remade."

Uncharacteristic silence.

There is one aspect of Seeger's life that Dunaway hardly touches on. This is Pete's silence about



the Stalinist holocaust and the repressive repercussions throughout Eastern Europe. Examples of Pete's seeming unwillingness to discuss the dishonest, manipulative and exploitive way the American Communist Party used the folk music movement are stated but not analyzed in the book. Some of us would like to know the whys and wherefores of our teacher and friend's uncharacteristic reticence.

On Feb. 6, Pete Seeger made his disagreement with Communist Party policies public for the first time in his long career, on the stage of New York City's Town Hall following Susan Sontag's blast at the corrupt left rhetoric of the past and her labelling communism: "fascism with a human face." "Long live controversy," said Pete at this

At a Solidarity rally Seeger sang for Poland, breaking his long critical silence on Communist policies and calling for "controversy to work its human magic."

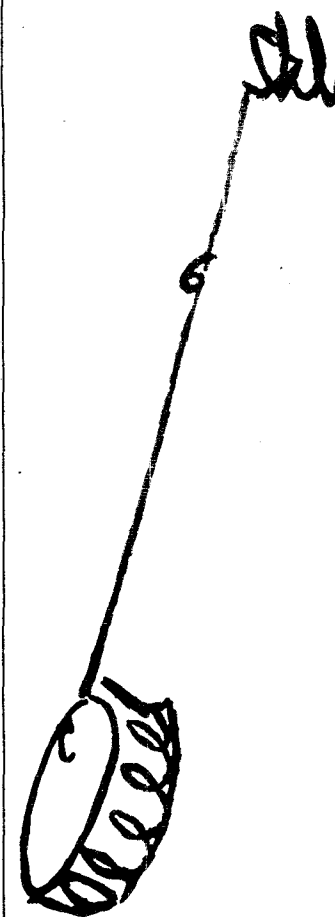
rally held by P.E.N. and the American Workers & Artists for Solidarity.

Shaking his head and speaking in a sad, tired voice, Pete said he had hoped that the Polish Communist leadership could have resolved the problems in Poland, but that this did not seem likely now. Although the Solidarity movement's Catholicism had made him suspicious, he said, he realized that he too had his religious faith. He urged the Polish junta to "allow controversy to work its human magic." Then strumming his banjo he sang "the only Polish song I know," a Jewish partisan song by the Warsaw Ghetto poet Hirsh Glik.

After describing the song Pete said, "I hope the Polish government agrees with me that this is a Polish song" and then went on to sing it in Yiddish and English.

Perhaps, since we truly owe our foot-tapping, split tenor (his own self-description) yodeling professor so much, we might together cast a shining light on the gulags in the East not only to support those currently in the struggle, but also to illuminate our own lives, our own histories and especially in order to teach our children well.

Bob Cohen is a singer-songwriter and teacher who is writing a book, *The Electronic Inquisition*, about TV news.



Pete Seeger

FICTION

As the world shook

This John Reed is mean and self-absorbed.

The Bohemians: John Reed & His Friends Who Shook the World

By Alan Cheuse
Applewood Books, 358 pp., \$12.95

By Jonah Raskin

Cheuse's publishers have wrapped this novel with a label that proclaims, "The Story of the People Whose Lives Inspired the Motion Picture 'Reds.'" But what *The Bohemians* has to do with *Reds* is anyone's guess. True enough, the characters in Cheuse's novel parade and sashay and stomp about with the same names as the characters in Warren Beatty's movie, but there the resemblance ends once and for all.

By defining John Reed, Louise Bryant & Co. as bohemians, Cheuse seems to be saying quite clearly that they weren't reds. At least not primarily.

Cheuse insists that it was the bohemians and their friends and not the Bolsheviks and their allies who shook the world in 10 days. To lodge Reed in Bohemia Cheuse has to leave out vast chunks of his hero's experience, not the least of which includes

the Russian Revolution.

A John Reed without the Russian Revolution is stretching the point but then nothing is beyond Cheuse's range. Highly stylized and self-consciously affected, *The Bohemians* continually strives for affects. Meandering in melodrama, soap opera and boys' adventure stories, it never manages to hang together.

Too often it fails miserably, as in the all-too-staged scene between John Reed and his first love, Mabel Dodge. There are two books on the couch—one by Karl Marx, the other by Lord Byron. And what does Cheuse have Mabel do but knock them aside, as her breasts make their

way out of her bodice.

The book as a whole is contrived. In the "Postscript" to *The Bohemians*, a "letter" from Louise Bryant to Max Eastman, Cheuse would have us believe that the novel is a long manuscript written by Reed in 1919, now at last coming to light. It's all too cute, and rather presumptuous too. An insult to John Reed—red or bohemian, whichever way you slice him—Cheuse's novel portrays a mean, humorless and self-absorbed young man, nobody we'd ever care to meet or read about.

Jonah Raskin's most recent book is *My Search for B. Traven* (Methuen).

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The Soviet Defense Ministry's reply to the Pentagon's *Soviet Military Power*. Complete text, with full-color photographs, charts, and maps. January 1982, Military Publishing House, Moscow. Paperback, 78 pp. ISBN 0-8285-9176-8. \$4.50.

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FOLK MUSIC

Of yellow roses and black balladeers

By Emily Friedman

There seems to be a prevailing sense that most of the important black cultural traditions have been catalogued—blues, gospel music, folklore, tales, even black oral history (through the work of the remarkable Bernice Reagon and others).

Well, that's not exactly so. In the first place, we have catalogued more black culture than we have preserved. We know about blues greats Furry Lewis, Big Walter Horton and Sleepy John Estes—to mention a few who have passed away in recent years—but they died insufficiently recorded, interviewed, filmed—or financed. Furthermore, much black creativity has been carried on in watered-down, distorted form—Marvin Gaye and Arthur Crudup's works are best known through the inaccurate, self-serving versions of their songs performed (and sometimes pirated) by the Rolling Stones and others.

Most important, huge sections of black American culture old and new have largely escaped

our attention. Some of this is due to the vagaries of written and oral tradition; some of it is due to political forces of one kind or another (remember that Booker T. Washington was "acceptable" long before Sojourner Truth was); and some of it is due to the fact that certain purely oral black traditions became inextricably linked with white and other traditions quite early on, and extracting the black elements at this late date can be a terribly difficult and ambiguous task.

However, there are those who are willing to try, and one of the foremost members of this small clan of believer/researchers is a young black musician named Sparky Rucker, of Knoxville, Tenn. (when he's not on the road, which he is most of the time). Rucker is a '60s-generation child who became interested in a part of black heritage that few others were pursuing—the legacy of black American ballads. These are the story songs—the long, often complex musical tales that we tend to associate more with the Anglo-Celtic tradition than with Black America. Rucker believed that there was a black ballad tradition in this country, and, while filling an impressive concert, festival and recording schedule, set out to try to document what he could find.

Double meanings.

His first major findings were published in *Sing Out!* magazine (Vol. 24, No. 6, 1976), in a splendid article in which he traced the legendary "Railroad Bill" back from current folklore to the person of one Morris Slater, a black hobo and fugitive from the law who was shot to death in 1897. The article included what was certainly the most extensive collection of verses to the "Railroad Bill" song family ever published.

But we had to wait until quite recently to hear much of Sparky's newer research. Finally, in *Heroes and Hard Times* (Green Linnet), he has collected some of these ballads and their stories in album form. Richly accompanied by his friend and colleague John Davis, and embellishing his own mellow-but-edgy singing with a wide range of instrumental and percussive effects, Rucker has produced a



Sparky Rucker researches the origins of black American story songs.

most important musical document. Here you will find the black railroad workers, criminals, victims and heroes who have contributed so much to American folk song.

The double-meaning language developed by slaves to guide those who fled for freedom, the viciousness of the stevedore we have come to know as Stagger Lee, the unfortunate gambling lady Delia ("Delia's Gone") Holmes, and the wicked John

Hardy—last man to be publicly hanged in West Virginia—all come bursting out of this record. The notes tell us how, when and where, and sometimes why these songs developed, and who the real people were whose lives inspired them.

I don't want to give away too much—this information is too important and was collected with too much effort—but I can give one example. We tend to think of "The Yellow Rose of Texas"

as a Texas military marching tune. It will be a surprise—if not a shock—to many to learn that the "yellow rose" was a light-skinned slave named Emily Morgan West who took up with the Mexican general Santa Anna, learned his plans for the Battle of San Jacinto, and then ran the lines to get the information to Sam Houston. West was held in such high regard that the lyrics of the song, we learn, were originally a poem written in her honor. Sparky found all of this out by following a hunch; the original lyrics spoke of "the sweetest rose of color that Texas ever knew," and he suspected that these lyrics referred to a black woman. It was with a good deal of satisfaction, he told me later, that he learned that his research was absolutely correct, and that the original poem was archived in a Texas museum.

All of us who are involved with folk culture love to hear—and to tell—stories like that; but in this time of retrenchment, the re-emergence of "fashionable" racism, and the potential disenfranchisement of black Americans, this wonderful record takes on a special significance. It is particularly poignant that the last cut on the album consists of a moving tribute to Harriet Tubman, including a verse of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* that she is said to have written herself. What she began is a long way from being finished, and we can be grateful to Sparky Rucker for giving us a few more links on the cultural chain that ties us to her.

Emily Friedman is editor of *Come for to Sing*, a quarterly folk music journal published in Chicago.

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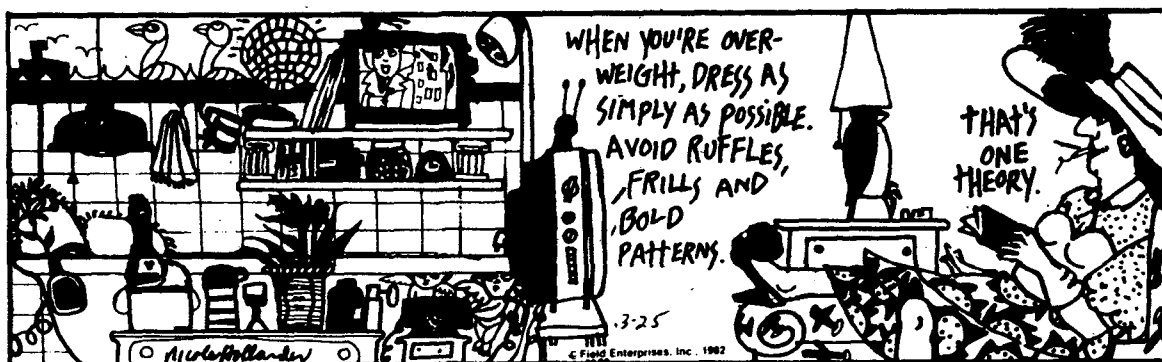
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SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



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NEW YORK, NY

March 19

The New York Institute for Social Therapy and Research's 6th annual lecture on Marxism and Mental Illness "The Psychology of Racism and the Racism of Psychology." Speakers are Lenora Fulani, Ralph Mendez and Fred Newman. Introductory remarks by Gilberto Gerena Valantin, city council member

from South Bronx. Friday, 8 p.m. at Teachers College, Columbia University, 120th and Broadway. Admission \$4.00. Call (212) 622-5056.

April 17

"Protest and Survive: Poland, El Salvador and Disarmament." An all-day conference featuring Daniel Singer, author of "The Road to Gdansk," Dan Smith, Chairperson of the Committee for European Nuclear Disarmament, and a speaker from the Movement Against U.S. Intervention in El Salvador. Workshops to be announced. Riverside Church, 120th and Riverside Drive. \$4.00. For advance tickets or to contribute, write Solidarity Support Campaign, 301 W. 105th St., NYC 10025. For information call (212) 222-9703.

BOSTON, MA

March & April

Boston DSOC Spring Courses: "Eurosociology: A Turning of the Tide?" with various speakers, Tuesdays, March 9-April 6. "American Radicalism in the Twentieth Century" with Maurice Isserman, author and historian, Tuesdays, March 16-April 13. "Socialist Thought—Labor Action" with Mike Schippini, ACTWU, Wednesdays, March 17-April 14. Contact: DSOC 120 Tremont St., Boston, (617) 426-9026.

DETROIT, MI

March 20 & 21

DSOC and NAM Merger Convention. Harry Boyte, Harry Britt, Cong. George Crockett, Maryann Mahaffey, Martin Gerber, Holly Graff, Michael Harrington, Dorothy

Healey, Millie Jeffries, Deborah Meier, Carole King, Bill Lucy, Roberta Lynch, Margery Phyfe, and many, many more left luminaries, plus workshops, party, dance and more. For info and advance registration, \$25: NAM, 3244 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 871-7700.

CHICAGO, IL

March 26-28

"Careers in Organizing"—a conference exploring alternative careers in social change and community activism. Will take place at Kent College of Law—77 S. Wacker. Sponsored by the National Training and Information Center, Northwestern University, and Catholic Charities. For information/registration, call (312) 243-3035.

March 27

"The Nuclear Threat: Radiation and

War," a talk by Dr. Carl Johnson, formerly of Jefferson (Rocky Flats) County, Colorado and leaders of Italian and German Disarmament movements. Saturday at 1 p.m. DePaul Center Theatre, 25 E. Jackson. \$3.00. For information, call (312) 427-2533. Sponsored by AFSC, CANP and PSR.

JAPAN

June 22-July 17

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Athletes

Continued from page 16

resolution. When Chris tells the injured Tory, "I know exactly how you feel," she's speaking literally, and that know-

ledge finally gives the two women emotional equality.

The resolution sets up a nice version of a familiar modern scene. For friendship to survive, old lover must meet new lover. Tory and Denny meet and regard each other with embarrassed curiosity and ambiguous emotions the situation instills.

Towne gives Tory her final moment of dignity. "He's pretty cute," she says,

"for a guy." The line is one of two or three that gives the lie to reviewers who think this movie isn't about lesbians. It is, and Tory, with her wedge haircut retrieved from the aggressively heterosexual Dorothy Hamill, is clearly not off to the war between the sexes. The war among the hurdlers will be enough.

There's more to this movie than the appearance of a starlet from Idaho with

a famous name and a bunch of crotch shots. That's because there's more to sports than the uncoordinated literati like to admit. Robert Towne has made the most pro-woman movie I've seen in years, and he's done it with a felicitous combination of the camera and the typewriter.

Barbara Presley Noble is always training for the next Olympics.

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MARCH, JEWISH CURRENTS, Editorial: "Why Sell More Arms to Jordan?" Jo Ann Mori, "Jewish Views of 'Americanism,'" Lieselotte Wolff, "Jewish Feminism in Germany," Marylou Hadditt, "Growing Up Assimilated in the South," David Platt, "Toscanini, Huberman and the Jews." Single copy \$1. Subscription \$10 USA, Jewish Currents, Dept. T, 22 East 17 St., NYC 10003.

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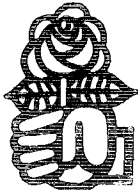
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RUBEN RUTT SHOUPUT

By Barbara Presley Noble

ROBERT TOWNE IS FAMOUS for his screenplays (*Chinatown*, *Shampoo*) so it's perhaps surprising that his first effort as a director is a film in which visual qualities nearly dominate narrative. *Personal Best* is about competitive athletics and relationships, and like both has very little plot. Instead, Towne lets the camera explore the elusive boundary between sex and sensuality. The movie features a lesbian relationship in which the two women aren't tormented, demented or about to be convented and, not incidentally, raises the question no one dared speak to Billie Jean King last year—just why are there so many lesbians in sports?

The film is set on tracks and fields from Eugene, Ore., to Cali, Colombia. Its epicenter is San Luis Obispo, where the Cal-Poly team trains for international competition. Tory (Patrice Donnelly) and Chris (Mariel Hemingway) meet at the 1976 Olympic trials, get involved, then live, train and compete with each other. After three years they split. When they meet again at the 1980 non-Olympic trials, Chris has a boyfriend, Denny (Kenny Moore), in tow. Both women have had to deal with all the problems of love and sport: getting hurt, recovering, starting again, getting old.

What's bad about the movie—its gloppy soundtrack and syrupy lapses into overlyricism—are overshadowed by what's good. *Personal Best* captures the naturalness and diversity of friendships among women athletes. They are intense or warm or both, and they are dominated by what is regarded in the rest of society as simply a sexual object—the female body.

Insiders and outsiders.

Towne makes the rest of society, that large part of the population not engaged in world class athletics, marginal. The two women read and shop once in awhile, but they go to class offscreen, between windsprints and pressups. The simple act of keeping all non-athletic activities out of sight neatly summarizes a subculture that protects itself by standing marginality on its head.

Women's sports until recently, haven't just been rarified and marginal. They've been outlawed because of their association with lesbianism. When I played tennis at a university 10 years ago, I did an anthropology project that allowed me to ask about the presence of lesbianism in sports. The automatic first answer, from straight and gay athletes: "There aren't as many as you think." That was usually followed either by heterosexual credential-mongering (long lists of boyfriends, accounts of herpes) or by a sheepish acknowledgement that, yes, if you really thought about it, there was a fair amount of same-sex diddling. In those days, anyone who eyeballed the local physical education program could see it was a haven for, if not lesbians, at least for women with a lesbian style—a forthright, independent, competent way of



Chris (left, Mariel Hemingway) and Tory (Patrice Donnelly) both share and compete.

PERSONAL BEST pushes the analogy between sex and sports.

moving that bore no resemblance to the uncoordinated softness of traditional femininity. The threat of being called a lesbian kept a lot of women away from sports that weren't either heterosexual in style—like figure skating, with its vampy female impersonator costumes, or pre-sexual, like gymnastics, with its dominance by children.

Personal Best couldn't have been made 10 years ago, before the explosion of interest in fitness and before the infusion of big money into some sports (pioneered by the reluctantly lavender Billie Jean).

Tory wears the recent lesbian haircut of choice: a cloche of dark hair that sets off her strong features. She has a face and firm, supple command of her body that dares anyone to call her dyke. Chris, with her wispy hair and barmitzvah boy voice, is the post-outlaw jock, a regression to an androgenous mean. Ten years ago Tory would have been a cute butch and Chris a questionable femme. Now they look womanly. What used to be lesbian style has become a variation of being fit.

I suspect this change is more of a relief to women who are doing sports for the first time and to male sportscasters than for athletes, who've always had more to get exercised over than lesbianism. Competing in sports involves a thorough demystification of the physical, and to the extent that lesbianism is a sexual issue, it also gets demystified in *Personal Best*. The full frontal nudity and crotch exposure of the movie suggests that the

sexual can elide naturally into the simply physical. The film indicates how little athletes can conceal in the normal course of their days. Outsiders regard the juncture of the thigh and the pelvis, between the legs, as an erotic area. The same area on a high jumper is exposed regularly to any dumb Howard Cosell who happens across the track. That accounts for the lack of reverence for things sexual in this movie: the jokes and ease between male and female athletes. To them, there's no mystery about what bodies look like or how they work, from any angle.

For amateurs, that lack of mystery can be enormously liberating. A friend who started exercising in her late 20s told me she had never realized her body was "normal" until she started taking showers in a locker room after running. She saw herself for the first time as having one body out of many possibilities rather than an impossibly goofy version of an ideal. Professional athletes also use that public information of the body, but in a more specific way. They read bodies for strengths and weaknesses that will help them win their event. A good athlete reads competitors the way lovers read each other. They use the cues the body gives—changes in breathing or positioning of hands, feet (toes, curled or uncurled?), legs, whatever—to assess what works best. What *feels* best? And how do you make it feel better? Competitors get better by pushing each other into the sensual pleasures of excelling.

Sex and sports.

The analogue to sex goes deeper. Individual sports require a concentration on self, on sensation, on developing tension, on establishing rhythm, on finding the one spot in the body that makes the whole thing work so it all ends in an ecstatic physical integration.

The paradox of sports, like the paradox of sex, is that the most intense concentration on oneself yields the most exquisite pleasure, but only if proper attention is paid to the competitor or lovers who makes it all possible. The difficulty in Tory and Chris' relationship is the confusion between competing and loving. No matter how similar the two enterprises seem, they ultimately diverge. The intimate physical knowledge lovers and athletes have of each other is used for different purposes: for lovers, to deepen their trust; for athletes, to be best. Tory's apparent defection to self-interest is easy for Chris to believe because the two realms collide and it's easier to think ill of a competitor than well of a lover.

When the two women split it's because Tory has been, deliberately or not, responsible for the younger woman's first sexual experience. It's a knowing plot twist because, for an athlete, the fall from innocence or grace isn't sex, it's an injury. If sex provides a taste of the world to come, injuries specify the dregs of the here and now. An injury makes clear, as Tory acknowledges to Chris before the last race, that someone who is younger, faster and stronger inevitably comes along. Their scene together is the movie's

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